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ANECDOTES
OF
POLITE LITERATURE.

In FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



L O N D O N,

Printed for G. BURNET, at Bishop Burnet's Head,
in the Strand. MDCCLXIV.

ANECDOTES

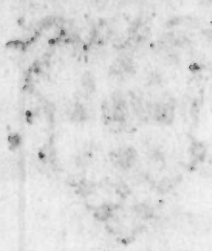
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LONDON:
Printed by J. G. ALLEN, 10, Abchurch Lane.
1854.

ANECDOTES

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OF PASTORAL POETRY.

SO many pens have been employed at different times on this popular subject, that my only business will be to explain the real and essential qualities of a pastoral poem. A point concerning which most critics differ.

Few species of poetry have excited more writers than the pastoral; but scarce any

of them deserve to be ranked in a higher class of poets than bare imitators. The sense of this universal pleasure, says the Rambler, has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances, in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one another, till he that reads the title of a poem may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes *.

The reason of this sameness in pastoral compositions is very evident; the species

* Rambler, vol. i. p. 198.

of

poetry will not admit so entertaining a range as many others. It is agreed by all critics that the scene of pastorals ought to be in the country ; and that all the imagery should be rural *. But in most other points they differ in opinion. Some are of opinion that the pastoral is an image of what they call *the golden age*, particularly Rapin, Fontenelle, Pope and Dryden†. But this notion has been since exploded as false, and is handled in a

* Vide Rapin's critical works, vol. ii. p. 225. Pope's works, vol. i. p. 4. small edit. Guardian vol. i. Numb. 22. Rambler vol. i. p. 205. Dryden's Virgil, vol. i. p. 89.

† If we would copy nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that pastoral is an image of what they call *the golden age*, so that we are not to describe our shepherds, as shepherds at this day really are ; but as they may be conceived then to have been.

Pope's Discourse on Pastorals, p. 5.

masterly manner by the Rambler in the 37th number. Rapin tells us, that the matter should be low, and nothing great is in the genius of it, its business being only to describe the little affairs of shepherds *. But this assertion is also founded in mere critical caprice. Whatsoever may, according to the common course of things happen in the country, may afford a proper subject for a pastoral poet†. It has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiments or beauty of

* Pope's Discourse on Pastorals, Vol. ii. p. 225.

† If we search in the writings of Virgil for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Rambler, vol. i. p. 202.

diction.

diction. For this reason, the Pollio of Virgil is truly bucolic *.

As all sorts of people inhabit the country, pastoral admits every rank; nor are any ideas improper, but such as owe not their original to rural objects. A young prince who loses his way in hunting, and either by himself or with his friend talks of his passion, and borrows his images and comparisons from rural beauties, is an excellent personage for an idyllium †.

It is also a most absurd notion among some pastoral writers, that as they should always have the low and despicable condition of a shepherd before them, their language

* Yet the generality of critics have rejected it.

† Reflexions critiques sur la poesie & peinture, par Du Bos, tom. i. sect. 22.

should be barbarous and rustic, and stuffed with obsolete terms, or that at least it should never rise out of the plainest and simplest poetry ; thus Spenser begins one of his pastorals,

Diggon Davie, I bid her good day :
Or Diggon her is, or I missay.

Dig. Her was her while it was day light,
But now her is a most wretched wight.

And Philips, in his homely strains,

Oh woful day ! O day of woe, quoth he,
And woful I, who live the day to see.

And again,

Ah me the while ! ah me, the luckless day !
Ah luckless lad, the rather might I say ;
Ah filly I ! more filly than my sheep,
Which on the flow'ry plains I once did keep.

The

The opposite fault to studied rusticity, is giving sublime and lofty ideas to shepherds. It cannot be in character to assemble a parcel of shepherds to debate on the corruptions of the court of Rome, as shepherds have done; or to endow them with a knowledge, either of politics or mathematics. I have already observed, that all ranks of persons may be introduced into a pastoral with propriety: Now a poet may make a courtier talk in a courtly strain, but the same language and ideas would be absurd in a shepherd. For which reason I cannot approve of those whining shepherds, who are made to say such a deal of things so marvellously tender, and so sublimely insipid in some of our eclogues. These pretended shepherds are neither copied nor imitated from nature; they

are a parcel of chimerical entities, and mere children of poets brains, who consult only their own imagination in forging them. They bear no manner of resemblance with our rustic inhabitants, and the shepherds of our times. These are peasants, whose sole occupation is to procure themselves, by the exercises of a laborious life, wherewithal to supply the pressing necessities of an ever indigent family. Thus the languishing shepherds of our eclogues are not copied from nature; their kind of life, wherein they intermix the most delicate pleasures with their rural cares, and especially with the solicitude of feeding their tender flocks, is far from being the life of any of our peasants †.

† Reflexions critiques sur la Poësie & Peinture, par Du Bos, tom. i. sect. 22.

Theocritus is allowed to excel all others in nature and simplicity †. He is the original, and Virgil little more than an elegant copy; but by means of the latter's judgment, he has in many places excelled his master. Among the Italians the famous Tasso Bonarelli, Guarini, and Marino, have written pastorals; but the first of these poets is thought far to surpass the rest ||. Luis de Gongora, and Camoens, have attempted the same in Spanish, but with little success;

† Pope vol. i. p. 7.

|| But the Italians are of opinion, that the Pastor Fido of Guarini is equal to his *Aminta*. Tasso himself, on reading it, cried out in a violent passion, *se non havuto visto il mio Aminta*. Other nations have a different opinion of his merit; the pastorals of Guarini, Bonarelli, and Marino, abounding with unnatural and forced epigrammatic turns, and crowded to the last degree with affected conceits and false glitter and ornament.

their

their idyllia, like those of Ronsard in French, have nothing in them that is tender or delicate ; those of Fontenelle are too polite and refined in the sentiment. His shepherds are all courtiers ; and are better suited to the toilettes of Paris than the forest of Arcadia*. In our own language Spenser, tho' extremely faulty in many particulars, wrote the best pastoral that has appeared since the time of Virgil, according to the opinion of Mr. Dryden, who praises his Calendar highly. Pope says, that in his manners, thoughts, and characters, he comes near to Theocritus himself.

Mr. Pope's pastorals have been criticised in so masterly a manner by Mr. Warton, that I shall forbear to speak particularly on him here. He has made

* Warton's Virgil, vol. i. p. 46.

his shepherds speak a language too
 courtly for people in their situation, tho'
 not too refined for pastoral, if it had
 been given to proper personages ; but
 Mr. Pope was of opinion with other cri-
 tics, that they were the only proper per-
 sons to be introduced into an eclogue*.

The pastorals of Mr. Gay are compos-
 ed in too homely a strain. The end of
 all poetry is to please the imagination ;

* Upon the whole, the principal merit of the
 pastorals of Pope, consists in their correct and mu-
 sical versification ; musical, to a degree of which
 rhyme could hardly be thought capable ; and in
 giving the first specimen of that harmony in Eng-
 lish verse, which is now become indispensably ne-
 cessary, and which has so forcibly and univer-
 sally influenced the public ear, as to have render-
 ed every moderate rhymers melodious. Pope
 lengthened the abruptness of Waller, and at the
 same time contracted the exuberance of Dryden.
 Essay on the writings and genius of Pope, p. 10.

but

but what pleasure can we receive from an imitation of the language and rustic customs of shepherds, without being enlivened with any variety of incidents, or harmony of versification? Five hundred such lines as these,

I rue the day, a rueful day I trow,
The woful day, a day indeed of woe † !

will never please a reader of taste, who expects something even in pastorals, besides a barbarous rusticity. One more instance of this woful simplicity, I must quote from Gay's pastorals :

Ah woful day ! ah woful noon and morn !
When first by thee my younglings white were
shorn.

† Gay's poems, vol. i. p. 97.

Then

Then first, I ween, I cast a lover's eye *,
My sheep were filly, but more filly I.

Gay's

* Gay's poems, vol. i. p. 84. This poet was more celebrated for the Beggars Opera, a satire which was attended with amazing effects. He wrote it in an ill-humour, and being brought upon the stage in the beginning of November 1727, it was received with greater applause than had ever been known on any occasion. For besides being acted in London sixty-three days, without interruption, and renewed the next season with success, it spread into all the great towns of England, was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Bristol fifty, &c. It made its progress into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days successively; and lastly, was acted in Minorca. The ladies carried about with them favourite songs of it in their fans, and houses were furnished with it in screens. The fame of it was not confined to the author only; the person who acted Polly, till then obscure, being all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved, and sold in great numbers; her life written; books of letters

Gay's fables are poetic, and some of them humourous; but their chief excellence

letters and verses to her published, and pamphlets made of her sayings and jokes *; and to crown all, after being the mother of several ante-nuptial children, she obtained the title and rank of a duchess by marriage. There is scarcely, if at all, to be found in history an example, where a private subject, undistinguished either by birth or fortune, had it in his power to feast his resentment so richly at the expence of his sovereign. But this was not all. He went on in the same humour, and cast a second part in the like-fashioned mold; which being excluded from the stage by the Lord Chamberlain, he was encouraged to print it with the title of Polly, by subscription, and this too, considering the powers employed against it, was incredibly large †. Neither yet did it end here.

* Swift's Intelligencer, No. iii.

† It was said, that he got more this way, than he could have done by a bare theatrical representation. Cibber the father, in his Apology, p. 144.

cellence is in their propriety, and that beautiful simplicity which characterises most of them ||.

The

here. The Duke and Duchefs of Queensbury took part in resenting the indignity put upon him by this last act of power, resigned their respective places at court, took our author into their house and family, and treated him with all the endearing kindness of an intimate and much beloved friend.

|| La Fontaine was at the same time the celebrated fabulist in France. His fables have vast merit, and his are tales humourous, but indelicate. His humour was exceedingly averse to confinement, or restraint of any kind, yet to oblige his parents he suffered himself to be married; and, though the most unfeeling and insensible of mortals, was yet so far captivated by the wit and beauty of his wife, that he never performed any considerable work without consulting her.

The generous and witty Madame de la Sabliere furnished him with an apartment and all necessaries in her house; who, one day having turned away
all

The same may be said of Philips's pastorals, which in fact are beneath criticism.

We

all her servants in a pet, declared that she had kept but three animals in her house, which were her dog, her cat, and La Fontaine. In this situation he continued twenty years, during which time he became perfectly acquainted with all the wits of his time, with Moliere, Racine, Boileau, Chapelle, &c.

The delights of Paris, and the conversation of these gentlemen, did not hinder him from paying Mrs. la Fontaine a visit every September; but that these visits might turn to some account, he never failed to sell a house or piece of land, so that, what with his wife's œconomy and his own, a handsome family estate was well nigh consumed. His Parisian friends urged him frequently to go and live with Mrs. la Fontaine, saying, that it was a shame to separate himself from a woman of her merit and accomplishments; and accordingly he set out with a purpose of reconciling himself to her

We have lately had some essays in this species of poetry, published under the title

her, and arriving at the town, enquired at his house for her. The servant not knowing him, said, she was gone to church : upon which he immediately returned to Paris, and when his friends enquired about his reconciliation, answered, that “ he had been to see his wife, but was told that she was at church.”

In the year 1692 he was seized with a dangerous illness : and when the priest came to talk to him about religion, concerning which he had lived in an extreme carelessness, though he had never been either an infidel, or a libertine, Fontaine told him, that “ he had lately bestowed some hours in reading the New Testament, which he thought a very good book.”

Fontaine's life had as little affectation in it as his writings : he was all nature, without a grain of art. He had a son, it seems, whom, after keeping a short time at home, he recommended to the patronage of the president Harlay. Fontaine being

title of *Oriental Eclogues*, that have very great merit. The language is neither def-

one day at a house, where his son was come, did not know him again; but observed to the company, that he thought him a boy of parts and spirit. He was told, that this promising youth was no other than his own son; he answered very unconcernedly, "Ha! truly I am glad on't." This apathy, which so many philosophers have vainly affected, was perfectly natural to Fontaine: it went thro' every part of his behaviour, and seemed to render him insensible to every thing without. As he had a wonderful facility in composing, so he had no particular apartment for that purpose, but fell to work, whenever the humour came upon him. One morning, Madame Bouillon going to Versailles, spied him in deep thought under a tree; and, when she returned in the evening, there was Fontaine in the same place and attitude, tho' the day had been cold, and much rain fallen.

It has been observed, that the finest writers have usually been but indifferent companions. This

was

despicably plain, nor too elegant for pastorals. And several of the eclogues con-

was Fontaine's case : for having once been invited to dine at the house of a person of distinction, for the more elegant entertainment of the guests, though he eat very heartily, yet not a word could be got from him, and when, rising soon after from the table, on pretence of going to the academy, he was told he would be too soon, " Oh then, said he, I'll take the longest way."

Racine once carried Fontaine to the Tenebræ, which is a service in the church of Rome, in representation of our Saviour's glory in the garden ; and perceiving it too long for him put a Bible into his hands. Fontaine, happening to open it at the prayer of the Jews in Baruch, read it over and over with such admiration, that he could not forbear whispering to Racine, " This Baruch is a fine writer ; do you know any thing of him ?" and for some days after, if he chanced to meet with any person of letters, when the usual compliments were over, his question was, " Have you ever read

contain some very beautiful descriptive lines. How expressive is the following account of a sultry desert ?

In

Baruch ? 'There's a first rate genius :'' and this so loud, that every body might hear him.

Being one day with Boileau, Racine, and other men of note, among whom were ecclesiastics, St. Austin was talked of for a long time, and with the highest commendations. Fontaine listened with his natural air, and at last, after a profound silence, asked one of the ecclesiastics with the most unaffected seriousness, " Whether he thought St. Austin had more wit than Rabelais ?" The doctor, eying Fontaine from head to foot, answered only by observing, that " he had put on one of his stockings the wrong side outward ;" which happened to be the case.

The nurse, who attended Fontaine in his illness, observing the fervor of the priest in his exhortations, said to him, " Ah, good Sir, don't disturb him so ; he is rather stupid than wicked :'' and at another time, " God won't have the heart to damn him." These, and many other stories, are told

In silent horror o'er the boundless waste,
 The driver Hassan with his camels past :
 One cuse of water on his back he bore,
 And his light scrip contain'd a scanty store ;
 A fan of painted feathers in his hand,
 To guard his shaded face from scorching sand.
 The sultry sun had gain'd the middle sky,
 And not a tree, and not an herd was nigh ;
 The beasts, with pain, their dusky way pursue,
 Shrill roar'd the winds, and dreary was the view.
 With desp'rate sorrow wild, th' affrighted man
 Thrice sigh'd, thrice strook his breast ; and thus
 began :
 " Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
 " When first for Schiraz walls I bent my way *."

told of Fontaine, which either are, or, as we suppose, might have been true. One thing, however, must be mentioned to his honour : it is, that his widow being molested about the payment of some public money, the intendant gave orders, that no tax or impost should be levied upon his family ; nor has this distinguishing favour ever been revoked by any succeeding intendants.

* Oriental Eclogues, p. 7.

This is a very expressive and well-wrought description. The poetry in the following lines is worthy of Pope himself.

Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
Or moss-grown fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know,
Which plains more blest, or verdant vales
bestow :

Here rocks alone, and tasteless sands are found,
And faint and sickly winds for ever howl a-
round †.

The versification in these lines is extremely harmonious, and the expression rich and happy. These eclogues are much superior in merit to those of Gay, Philips, or any others of those absurd writers of pastorals, who imagine that a laboured rusticity forms their peculiar

† Oriental Eclogues, p. 8.

beauties.

beauties. One more passage I must quote—the peculiar excellence of it will excuse the quotation.

At that dead hour the silent asp shall creep,
If ought of rest I find upon my sleep ;
Or some swoln serpent twist his scales around,
And wake to anguish with a burning wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented poor,
From lust of wealth, and dread of death secure !
They tempt no desarts, and no griefs they find ;
Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind *.

This elegant author charms us with his expressive beauty. His language is every where pure and masculine ; his versification generally musical ; and his descriptions wrought with a masterly hand.

Oriental Eclogues, p. 10.

S E C T. II.

Of SATIRE.

THAT the proper subjects for satirical writings are the follies and foibles of human nature, is agreed by all critics ; but ill-nature has too often obliged its votaries to break through this necessary rule. 'Tis remarkable to observe, how little ill-nature Horace or Juvenal have admitted into their satires. The genteel raillery of the former, was always directed against the follies and absurdities of the age. And Juvenal lashed the vices of his times with all the keenness of satire ; but neither of them ever descended to private attacks. The writings of these celebrated authors are well known ; and perhaps we shall find the

the moderns equal to them in this species of composition.

That Homer was the first satirist cannot be asserted ; but he is the first poet of whom any satirical strokes are handed down to us. I should never hesitate to rank him among the first of satirists, if it was only on account of that admirable character of Therfites.

Therfites only clamour'd in the throng,
Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue :
Aw'd by no shame, by no respect controul'd,
In scandal busy, in reproaches bold :
With witty malice studious to defame ;
Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim.
But chief he gloried with licentious style,
To lash the great, and monarchs to revile.
His figure such as might his soul proclaim,
One eye was blinking, and one leg was lame ;
His mountain shoulders half his breast o'erspread,
Thin hairs bestrew'd his long mis-shapen head.

Spleen

Spleen to mankind his envious heart possess,
 And much he hated all, but most the best.
 Ulysses or Achilles still his theme ;
 But royal scandal his delight supreme.
 Long had he liv'd the scorn of ev'ry Greek,
 Vext when he spoke, yet still they heard him
 speak.

Cervantes, secretary to the Duke of
 Alva, in his romance of Don Quixote, has
 far excelled any thing of the kind left
 us by the ancients ; nor have latter ages
 produced a satire that can be compared
 to it. The nobility of Spain, in his
 time, were intoxicated with the idea of
 knight-errantry. Cervantes attacked
 this public folly, and lashed it with the
 most inimitable spirit of humour and
 ridicule *. The consequences of this sa-

* This admirable author has discovered the
 most penetrating understanding and knowledge of
 mankind. His characters are as uncommon as
 they are natural.

tire

tire were as surprising as they were swift ; the taste of the whole kingdom was reformed immediately, and the absurdity of their former notions was considered in its true light. No modern satire was ever so generally read as this of Cervantes. It has been translated into all the languages of Europe ; and every polite nation admires the fine strokes it contains, as much as the Spaniards themselves. Quevedo might well declare his intention of burning all his own books, when he read Don Quixote ||.

|| But there is one impropriety, which I wonder the critics never observed, in a book wherein propriety is in general so exactly observed. Cervantes has painted Sancho a dull illiterate clown ; but when he fixes him in his government, he is there no longer the Sancho that had attended Don Quixote, but a governor whose shrewdness and understanding far exceeds any thing that could have been expected from him.

Rabe-

Rabelais possessed as much wit almost as any man that ever existed. The strokes of humour that he has introduced into his celebrated romance are numerous, and peculiarly marked ; the satire is keen, and the whole work bears many signs of a fertile imagination. This author would have been in higher esteem, had he not wrote in too licentious a strain.

Boileau's satires and his *Lutrin*, discover throughout an infinite deal of poignant satire, happily tempered with great politeness and delicacy of wit. This elegant writer had remarkable success, when he followed the bent of his genius, and applied himself to satirical compositions. Yet he has sometimes offended against the just rules of satire, by making mankind in general, instead of the
vicious

vicious part, the subject of his ridicule. " Monsieur Boileau," says Mr. Addison, " has in his last satire endeavoured to expose the female sex in general, without doing justice to the valuable part of it. Such levelling satires are of no use to the world, and for this reason I have often wondered how Monf. Boileau, who was a man of exquisite judgment, and a lover of virtue, could think human nature a proper subject for satire in another of his celebrated pieces, which is called, *The satire upon man*. What vice or frailty can a discourse correct, which censures the whole species alike, and endeavours to show by some superficial strokes of wit, that brutes are the most excellent creatures of the two? A satire should expose nothing but what is corrigible, and make a due discrimination

nation between those who are, and those who are not the proper objects of it *."

But the *Lutrin* of this agreeable author is free from those faults that Mr. Addison so justly corrects in the above passage. It is, although inferior to Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, certainly a very beautiful poem; full of striking and lively imagery, and abounds with many exquisite descriptions.

Among the writers of our own nation have appeared some geniuses particularly formed for satire. The *Hudibras* of Butler is universally known, and, among those who take the pains to inform themselves of the many persons and circumstances alluded to, as universally admired. His poem certainly contains many

* Spectator, Vol. iii. Numb. 209.

beautiful

beautiful passages, that are composed with infinite wit *. 'Tis well known what great advantage the royal cause received from this ingenious satire; nevertheless so unmindful was Charles the Second to reward merit, that he suffered Butler to remain in obscurity and want, without ever having the generosity to assist him. At present Hudibras is but seldom read †.

Dryden

* No author ever excelled Butler in the art of introducing abundance of erudition into so comic a poem. Few pieces ever composed contain more learning than Hudibras.

† Voltaire, speaking of Hudibras, says, " Il y a sur tout un poeme Anglois que je désespererois de vous faire connoître, il s'appelle Hudibras. Le sujet est la guerre civile, & la secte des puritains tournée en ridicule. C'est Don Quichotte, c'est notre satire Menippée fondus ensemble. C'est de tous les livres que j'ai jamais lu, celui où j'ai trouvé le plus d'esprit, mais c'est aussi le plus intraduisible.

Dryden had great abilities for satire. The generality of his pieces are almost the refuse of our language, but in some appears the richness of his genius, and in none more than his satirical compositions. Absalom and Achitophel, and Mac Fleckno, are master-pieces : in these poems, but particularly the former, we discover such a pomp and harmony of numbers, such a happy turn and elegance of expression, and such exquisite art in portraying characters, that, to

traduisible. Qui croiroit qu'un livre qui faisoit tous les ridicules du genre humain, & qui a plus de pensées que de mots, ne put souffrir la traduction ? C'est que presque tout y fait allusion à des aventures particulières. Le plus grand ridicule tombe sur tout sur les théologiens que peu de gens du monde entendent. Il faudroit à tout moment un commentaire, & la plaisanterie expliquée cesse d'être plaisanterie. Tout commentateur de bons mots est un sot. — Lettres sur les Anglois, p. 196.

use

use an expression of Mr. Hume's, we cannot but wonder at the great inferiority, or rather absurdity of many of his other writings *. Possibly there never was

* That many of the writings of this great man are very mean, must be allowed, and perhaps some of the abuse which was levelled at him in his lifetime might be well grounded; but not a thousandth part of such slanders are true. Of all others, the viperous pen of Bishop Burnet deserves the most contempt: He pours out all the malice of his soul in a heavy, dull, prolix stile.

“ I have been informed from England, says he, that a gentleman, who is famous both for poetry and several other things, has spent three months translating Mr. Varillas's history; but that, as soon as my reflections appeared, he discontinued his labour, finding the credit of his author was gone. Now, if he thinks it is recovered by his answer, he will perhaps go on with his translation; and this may be, for aught I know, as good an entertainment for him, as the conversation he has set on foot between the hinds and panthers, and all

was a character drawn in a more masterly manner than that of Zimri. As often

as

the rest of the animals, for whom Mr. Varillas may serve well enough as an author: and this history and that poem are such extraordinary things of their kind, that it will be but suitable to see the author of the worst poem become likewise the translator of the worst history that the age has produced. If his grace and his wit improve both proportionably, we shall hardly find, that he has gained much by the change he has made, from having no religion to chuse one of the worst. It is true, he had somewhat to sink from in matter of wit; but as for his morals, it is scarce possible for him to grow a worse man than he was. He has lately wreaked his malice on me for spoiling his three months labour; but in it he has done me all the honour that any man can receive from him, which is to be railed at by him. If I had ill-nature enough to prompt me to wish a very bad wish for him, it should be, that he would go on and finish his translation. By that it will appear, whether the English nation, which is the most

as it has been quoted, its many beauties will plead for my inserting it here. In

most competent judge in this matter, has, upon the seeing our debate, pronounced in Mr. Varillas's favour or mine. It is true, Mr. Dryden will suffer a little by it; but at least it will serve to keep him in from other extravagancies; and, if he gains little honour by this work, yet he cannot lose so much by it, as he has done by his last employment." This passage, besides the fact it lets us into, shews how ill an opinion Dr. Burnet had entertained of Mr. Dryden and his morals. Dr. Burnet speaks of him also in another place, in terms of equal dishonour: "The stage, says he, was defiled beyond all example; Dryden, the great master of dramatic poesy, being a monster of immodesty and impurities of all sorts." But here the poet found an advocate in the Lord Lansdown, who has flatly opposed the bishop's assertion: "Why, says his lordship, is Mr. Dryden stigmatized as a monster of immodesty and impurities of all sorts? He was so much a stranger to immodesty, that modesty in too great a degree was his failing. A monster of impurities of all sorts? Good God! what an idea must that give?"

In the first rank of these did Zimri stand.
 A man so various that he seemed to be
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome.
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong ;
 Was every thing by starts, and nothing long ;
 But in the course of one revolving moon,
 Was chymist, fidler, statesman, and buffoon :
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that dy'd in thinking.
 Blest madman, who cou'd every hour employ,
 With something new to wish or to enjoy !
 Railing and praising were his usual themes ;
 And both (to show his judgment) in extremes ;
 So over violent or over civil,
 That every man with him was god or devil.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art ;
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert :
 Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late,
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.

He

Is there any wickedness under the sun, but what
 is comprised in those few words ? But, as it hap-
 pens, he was the reverse of all this : a man of re-
 gular life and conversation, as all his acquaintance
 can vouch. And I cannot but grieve, that such
 expressions should escape from a bishop's pen."

He laugh'd himself from court; then sought relief,
In forming parties, but cou'd ne'er be chief.

The satire in this portrait is keen to the last degree; and the poetry nervous and elegant. The peculiar marks of the Duke of Buckingham's character are here exposed with the finest spirit of ridicule. But this nobleman had his revenge. The character of Achitophel is also drawn with great art and power of poetry; how severe are these lines?

And all to leave, what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd two legg'd thing, a son:
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolv'd to ruin, or to rule the state.

And how beautiful is the thought, in the passage where he celebrates the softer virtues of Absalom? He says,

In peace, the thoughts of war he could remove,
 And seem'd as he were only born for love.
 Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
 In him alone 'twas natural to please.

I could produce many more specimens out of this beautiful poem to strengthen my assertions ; but as the nature of this work lays me under a necessity of quoting many passages, I shall be as sparing of those that are not remarkable as I can consistently with my plan.

Swift possessed a genius naturally turned for satire, and had he cultivated it with that care and decency which true satire requires, he might possibly have proved the greatest master in that species of writing that ever appeared in the world. No mortal had ever more wit ; but that wit was not employed in the cause of virtue ; his poignant satire was levelled

levelled against human nature in general ; and tho' the vivacity of Swift's wit can never fail to entertain the imagination ; yet every reader, whose breast is warmed with more exalted notions of the dignity of human nature, must detest his principles. Gulliver's travels, that celebrated production of a fine irregular genius, is certainly in point of wit and satire one of the most exquisite works of imagination that ever was composed ; and had Swift wrote it only to satirize the vices and follies of human nature, he would have bore away the palm from every other satirist, in antient or modern times : some parts of these travels are not exceptionable, and deserve the greatest praise, when the wit is properly directed ; but the voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms, is such a laboured argument, to persuade

us that mankind are no better than brutes, that every honest mind must abominate so vile an attempt. In this part Swift's wit appears to the greatest disadvantage; it seems to desert the subject, and no where so evidently flags. Indelicacy is another great stain in the pages of this admired author's writings. In the journey to the flying island, are several unpardonable strokes, and some in the voyage to Brobdingnag. As to the peculiar beauties of this celebrated romance, the lively flashes of wit, the keenness of satire, the penetrating touches of the human heart, together with the more exterior beauties of composition, every one must allow it a most exquisite performance. Many of Swift's poems are wrote with that sharp satire and vivacity of wit, which distinguishes

all

all his writings, but some of them are greatly wanting in point of delicacy *.

Garth

* This writer, says Dr. Young, has so satirized human nature, as to give a demonstration in himself, that it deserves to be satirized. But, say his wholesale admirers, few could *so* have written; true, and fewer *would*. If it required great abilities to commit the fault, greater still would have saved him from it. But whence arise such warm advocates for such a performance? From hence, *viz.* before a character is established, merit makes fame; afterwards fame makes merit. *Swift* is not commended for this piece, but this piece for *Swift*. He has given us some beauties which deserve all our praise; and our comfort is, that his faults will not become common; for none can be guilty of them, but who have wit as well as reputation to spare. His wit had been less wild, if his temper had not jostled his judgment. If his favourite *Houyhnhnms* could write, and *Swift* had been one of them, every horse with him would have been an ass, and he would have written a panegyric on mankind, saddling with much reproach

Garth, in his Dispensary, has employed a great deal of wit to ridicule the physicians.

proach the present heroes of his pen : on the contrary, being born amongst men, and, of consequence, piqued by many, and peevish at more, he has blasphemed a nature little lower than that of angels, and assumed by far higher than they ; but surely the contempt of the world is not a greater virtue, than the contempt of mankind is a vice. Therefore I wonder that, though foreborn by others, the laughter-loving *Swift* was not reproved by the venerable Dean, who could sometimes be very grave.

For I remember, as I and others were taking with him an evening's walk, about a mile out of *Dublin*, he stopt short ; we passed on ; but perceiving he did not follow us, I went back ; and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upwards at a noble elm, which in its uppermost branches was much withered and decayed : pointing at it, he said, “ I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top.” As in this he seemed to prophesy like the Sybils ; if, like one of them, he had
burnt

ficians. 'Tis a well wrote poem, although little more than an imitation of Boileau's *Lutrin*, but greatly inferior. There are some faults in it, which must disgust a reader of discernment. The following lines contain a great deal of just criticism:

The

But in your lines let energy be found,
And learn to rise in sense and sink in sound.
Harsh words, tho' pertinent, uncouth appear,
None please the fancy who offend the ear.
In sense and numbers if you would excel,
Read Wycherley, consider Dryden well.
In one what vigorous turns of fancy shine,
In th' other, Syrens warble in each line.
If Dorset's sprightly muse but touch the lyre,
The smiles and graces melt in soft desire,
And little loves confess their am'rous fire †.

burnt part of his works, especially *this* blasted branch of a noble genius, like her too, he might have risen in his demand for the rest *.

* Conjectures on Original Composition, p. 65.

† Dispensary, canto iv.

The versification is musical, and the whole passage truly poetic ; but who in the name of wonder would imagine Garth could have offended against the plainest rules of propriety, so much as to put the above passage into the mouth of the fury Disease. In his fight of the physicians, he consulted propriety with great nicety, when he armed them so much in character. But the poem in general abounds with a great deal of wit, and some manly and keen satire. I must agree in opinion with the ingenious author of the *Essay on the writings and genius of Pope*, that the *Dispensary* is not so good a satire as the *Sangrado of Le Sage*. The latter contains infinitely more wit, and is worked up to a fine pitch of satire, by a great number of little strokes of humour. Le Sage was an excellent satirist.

Pope

Pope deserves to be considered more particularly. His satires are the most excellent that ever appeared in the English language, and some of them the best pieces that Pope wrote. The genius of this celebrated writer nearly resembled that of Horace and Boileau, the former of whom he made his pattern in poetry, all famous for their abilities in satire. A learned gentleman that has lately examined some of Pope's works, and amongst others the *Rape of the Lock*, makes no scruple to assert, that that piece is the best satire extant *. And when we consider

* Upon the whole, I hope it will not be thought an exaggerated panegyric to say, that the *Rape of the Lock* is the best satire extant; that it contains the truest and liveliest picture of modern life; and that the subject is of a more elegant nature, as well as more artfully conducted, than that of any other heroï-comic poem. Pope
here

sider the invention that poem displays, the correctness of the versification, the exquisite judgment of the author in introducing the machinery of the Sylphs in their proper places (for at first it was published without them) and the elegant raillery with which it abounds, we have great reason to acquiesce in his opinion.

Pope's

here appears in the light of a man of gallantry, and of a thorough knowledge of the world; and indeed he had nothing in his carriage or deportment of that affected singularity, which has induced some men of genius to despise, and depart from, the established rules of politeness and civil life; for all poets have not practised the sober and rational advice of Boileau,

Que les vers ne soient pas votre eternal emploi :
Cultivez vos amis, soyez homme de foi.

C'est peu d'être agréable & charmant dans un
livre;

Il fait savoir encore, & converser, & vivre.

L'Art Poétique, Chant 4.

If

Pope's imitations of Horace, with the prologue and epilogue to his satires, are without dispute some of the best of his works; but very few, if any of his pieces, excel them. No author ever imitated

If some of the most candid among the French critics begin to acknowledge, that they have produced nothing in point of sublimity and majesty equal to the *Paradise Lost*, we may also venture to affirm that in point of delicacy, elegance, and fine turned raillery, on which they have so much valued themselves, they have produced nothing equal to the *Rape of the Lock*. It is in this composition, Pope principally appears a poet; in which he has displayed more imagination than all his other works taken together. It should however be remembered, that he was not the first former and creator of those beautiful machines the Sylphs, on which his claim to imagination is chiefly founded. He found them existing ready to his hand; but has indeed employed them with singular judgment and artifice.

Essay on Pope, p. 246.

the

the manner of Horace so happily ; and as Pope's genius was naturally inclined to satire, he has filled these imitations with a thousand bright sallies of wit, and keen strokes of ridicule, in many places much more delicate and superior to those of his original. Pope's are generally such close imitations that they cannot in their nature display that great principle of original poetry, *invention*: But for many of those fine strokes of severe, but genteel satire, in the prologue and epilogue, he was indebted to nothing but his own imagination ; and it will not be a difficult task to prove that they abound with some beautiful passages, superior to any thing of the kind our language has produced. The satire on bad authors is every where remarkably animated. The following passage on the *cacoëthes scribendi* is extremely severe.

1. Is there a parson much be-mus'd in beer,
 A maudlin poetess, a rhyming peer,
 A clerk, foredoom'd his father's soul to cross,
 Who pens a stanza, when he should engross?
 Is there, who, lock'd from ink and paper, scrawls
 With desp'rate charcoal round his darken'd walls? *

Pope, in all his satirical writings, is very happy in his epithets; a parson *much be-mus'd in beer*, maudlin poetess, &c. throw a great pleasantry over the whole passage, and heightens the ridicule extremely: the circumstance of the clerk is also finely introduced †.

The

* Pope's works, vol. iv. p. 4. small edit.

† The thoughts of men, says Voltaire, are become an important object in commerce: the book-sellers in Holland gain a million yearly, because Frenchmen formerly had wit. A middling romance is, as I am perfectly well assured, among books, what a fool, that would be thought a man of imagination, is in the world: people laugh at him,

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but

The whole passage in the beginning of the prologue, in which he supposes his interest and advice desired by a parcel of hungry scribblers, is worked up with an infinite deal of wit. Sure never author ridiculed these scribblers with such severity of satire.

2. And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel, "Keep your piece nine years."

Nine

but yet they put up with him. This romance gives bread to the author who has composed it, to the bookseller who vends it, together with the type-founder, printer, bookbinder, hawker, and, lastly, the retailer of execrable wine, with whom all those gentlemen lay out their money: this work will moreover serve for two or three hours amusement to a few women, with whom novelty is the most essential quality in books, as it is in every thing else. Thus contemptible as it is, it has produced two things of vast importance, profit and pleasure.

Voltaire's Works, vol. xvii. p. 36.

Nine years! cries he, who high in Drury-lane
Lull'd by soft Zephyrs thro' the broken pans,
 Rhymes e'er he wakes, and prints before term ends,
*Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends.**

What can be more keen than the satire in these lines? With what art the poet has introduced the circumstance of the garret with broken windows; and has coupled the real and pretended motive for publishing together, with vast wit?

3. Who shames a scribbler? break one cobweb
 thro',

He spins the slight self-pleasing thread anew;
 Destroy his fib or sophistry, in vain,
 The creature's at his dirty work again;
 Thron'd on the center of his thin designs,
 Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines! †

The metaphorical allusion of a scribbler to a spider in this passage is poetical-

* Verse 39.

† Verse 90.

ly beautiful; and much more expressive than a comparison would have been. The likeness is very striking, and the circumstances naturally rise out of one another.

4. From *flashing* Bentley down to *pidling* Tibalds*:

“ This great man, says Dr. Warburton, with all his faults, deserved to be put into better company.” Pope speaks of him as a man of superior abilities to Theobald. That he had very great learning was never disputed, but the epithet *flashing* characterised his critical abilities extremely well. No one could better explain a corrupted passage in a classic writer; but his fault was his attacking the sound places, and when once he had pitched on a line to be altered, he

* Verse 164.

was most unmerciful on his author, to make way for his own emendations *.

Theobald, the second of these worthies, was so unfortunate as to offend Pope by publishing an edition of Shakespear against him, for which he was put into the Dunciad.

* Bentley showed the way to critics to correct passages merely for the sake of consonance of metaphor, and gave a specimen in his notes on Callimachus of his emendations of Horace, by correcting the following verse,

Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus.

Hor. art. poet. 441.

where he reads *ter natos*, for consonance of metaphor. But pray take notice *ter natos* is a metaphorical expression; for *nascor*, *natus*, signifies to be born; and are things *born* brought to the anvil? Is not here dissonance of metaphor with a witness? For an examination of some of the Doctor's corrections, vide Upton's Critical Observations on Shakespear, sect. 1. and p. 99, 119, 137, 178.

There hapless Shakespear, yet of Tibbald fore,
Wish'd he had blotted for himself before.

But his edition is preferable to Mr. Pope's; and indeed is his only labour that has escaped oblivion. The publick at this time waits with impatience for the edition of Shakespear which the celebrated Mr. Johnson is preparing. We have great reason to believe that so learned and ingenious a gentleman will do as much justice to the merits of that immortal man, as the unhappy state of his works will admit.

5. Ev'n such small critics some regard may claim,
Preserv'd in Milton's or in Shakespear's name.
Pretty in amber to observe the forms
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!
The things we know, are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil they got there*.

* Verse 167.

The

The imagery in these lines is excessively beautiful, the satire poignant to the last degree, and the thought expressed with great propriety. Nothing so detestable, but its representation in amber, or in works of art, gives great pleasure. Dr. Warburton justly observes on this passage, that the thought is extremely beautiful.

6. How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe !

And swear, not Addison himself was safe.

Peace to all such ! but were there one whose fires,

True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires ;
 Blest with each talent and each art to please,
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease ;
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
 And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise ;
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;
 Alike reserv'd to blame or to commend,
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;
 Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,
 And so obliging that he ne'er oblig'd ;
 Like Cato give his little senate laws,
 And sit attentive to his own applause ;
 While wits and templars ev'ry sentence raise,
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise——
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be ?
 Who would not weep, if Atticus were he ?

This celebrated satire on Addison is drawn in so masterly a manner, and contains so many beautiful strokes, that I could not forbear quoting it at length. That line, *not Addison himself was safe*, is a very artful preparative for the following character, which is certainly one of the finest pieces of satire extant.

Addison was envious of Pope's reputation as a poet, and endeavoured to suppress

press his rising merit. "It is certain," says the author of the essay on Pope, "that Addison discouraged Pope from inserting the machinery in the Rape of the Lock: that he privately insinuated that Pope was a tory and a jacobite, and had a hand in writing the Examiners: that Addison himself translated the first book of Homer, published under Tickel's name †: and that he secretly

† Concerning this accusation, there are some circumstances in Pope's letters, that serve to prove it very clearly. Dr. Parnell writes to him, "I have seen the first book of Homer, which came out at a time when it could not but appear as a kind of setting up against you. My opinion is, that you may, if you please, give them thanks who writ it. Neither the numbers nor the spirit have an equal mastery with your's; but what surprizes me more is, that a scholar being concerned, there should happen to be some mistakes in the author's sense;

cretly encouraged Gildon to abuse Pope in a virulent pamphlet, for which Addison

sense; such as putting the light of Pallas's eyes into the eyes of Achilles, making the taunt of Achilles to Agamemnon (that he should have spoils when Troy should be taken) to be a cool and serious proposal."—Pope's Works, vol. viii. p. 264.

And Dr. Berkley as follows, "Some days ago three or four gentlemen and myself, exerting that right which all readers pretend to over authors, sat in judgment upon the two new translations of the first Iliad. Without any partiality to my countrymen, I assure you, they all gave the preference where it was due; being unanimously of opinion that your's was equally just to your sense with Mr. ———'s, and without comparison more easy, more poetical, and more sublime."

And Mr. Gay. "I have just set down Sir Samuel Garth at the opera. He bid me tell you, that every body is pleased with your translation, but a few at Button's; and that Sir Richard Steel told him, that Mr. Addison said the other translation

was

Addison paid Gildon ten guineas *. The letters which had passed between these two poets, that are published in Mr. Pope's works, contain many compliments from Addison to Pope on his translation of Homer. But what the latter's opinion was of his sincerity, may

was the best that ever was in any language.— I am informed that at Button's your character is made very free with as to morals, &c. and Mr. Addison says, that your translation and Tickell's are both very well done, but that the latter has more of Homer." Dr. Arbuthnot writes to him, I congratulate you upon T * 's first book. It does not indeed want its merit ; but I was strangely disappointed in my expectation of a translation nicely true to the original ; whereas in those parts where the greatest exactness seems to be demanded, he has been the least careful, I mean the history of antient ceremonies and rites, &c. in which you have with great judgment been exact." Ib. p. 265, 266.

* Page 159.

be

be gathered from one of his letters to Jarvis; who, it seems, wrote to him concerning a proposal to strengthen the pretended friendship between them; and in answer to it, among other things, Mr. Pope says, " what you mention of the friendly office you endeavoured to do between Mr. Addison and me, deserves acknowledgments on my part. You thoroughly know my regard to his character, and my propensity to testify it by all ways in my power. You as thoroughly know the scandalous meanness of that proceeding which was used by Philips, to make a man I so highly value suspect my dispositions towards him. But as, after all, Mr. Addison must be the judge in what regards himself, and has seemed to be no very just one to me; so I must own to you, I expect nothing but civility from him, how

much

much soever I wish for his friendship.
 As for any offices of real kindness or service, which it is in his power to do me, I should be ashamed to receive them from any man who had no better opinion of my morals, than to think me a party-man ; nor of my temper, than to believe me capable of maligning, or envying another's reputation as a poet. So I believe it time to convince him as to both, to show him the shallow depths of these half-witted creatures who misinformed him, and to prove that I am incapable of endeavouring to lessen a person whom I should be proud to imitate, and therefore ashamed to flatter. In a word, Mr. Addison is sure of my respect at all times, and of my real friendship whenever he shall think fit *to know me for what I am.*"

Ad-

Addison cannot be compared as a poet to Pope, who was far his superior in that capacity; but I cannot help forming a different opinion of his poetic essays, from what Mr. Warton entertains of them, who seems rather prejudiced against this great man's works. He says the first of his poems, addressed to Dryden, Sir John Somers, and King William, are languid, prosaic, and void of any poetical imagery or spirit: that the poem to Dryden is languid, I grant; but why he should couple the other two, particularly that to King William, I cannot so clearly perceive; as it abounds with some very poetical strokes, and is composed with spirit: it has on the whole too much merit to be characterised in such contemptible terms. His account of the greatest English poets contains some very beautiful lines, particularly where

where he speaks of Cowley and Milton, the latter of whom is celebrated with great spirit. This ingenious author's opinion of the merit of the letter from Italy, I believe will not be generally adopted. To say that there are no poetic strokes of enthusiasm in it, is far from being true. And let the reader himself judge whether the following lines contains only a *phlegmatic elegy* on Raphael, the term by which our author characterises them.

Fain would I Raphael's god-like art rehearse,
And show th' immortal labours in my verse,
Where from the mingled strength of shade and
light ;

A new creation rises to my sight ;
Such heav'nly figures from his pencil flow,
So warm with life his blended colours glow.
From theme to theme with secret pleasure tost,
Amidst the soft variety I'm lost :
Here pleasing airs my ravish'd soul confound,
With circling notes and labyrinths of sound !

Here

Here domes and temples rise in distant views,
And opening palaces invite my muse *.

The next poem of Mr. Addison's, which the author of the essay on Pope examines, is the Campaign. †. The only merit

* Addison's works, vol. i. p. 51.

† Mr. Budgel, in the life of the late Lord Orery, tells us : " Soon after the battle of Blenheim; Mr. Boyle (late Lord Carleton) then chancellor of the exchequer, was entreated by the Lord Godolphin, to go to Mr. Addison, and desire him to write something that might transmit the memory of that glorious victory to posterity. As I believe this story is not commonly known, and as I think it does honour to the late Lord Halifax (whose memory I must ever love and respect) I shall lay it before my readers. Upon the arrival of the news of the victory of Blenheim, the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, in the fulness of his joy, meeting with the late Lord Halifax, told him, it was pity the memory of such a victory should be ever forgot ; he added, that he was pretty sure
his

merit he allows it, is its containing *some*
well wrought descriptions and pathetic
strokes,

his Lordship, who was so distinguished a patron of men of letters, must know some person, whose pen was capable of doing justice to the action. My Lord Halifax replied, that he did indeed know such a person ; but would not desire him to write upon the subject his Lordship had mentioned. The Lord Treasurer entreating to know the reason of so unkind a resolution, Lord Halifax briskly told him, that he had long with indignation observed, that while too many fools and blockheads were maintained in their pride and luxury, at the expence of the public, such men as were really an honour to their country, and to the age they lived in, were shamefully suffered to languish in obscurity : that, for his own part, he would never desire any gentleman of parts and learning, to employ his time in celebrating a ministry, who had neither the justice nor generosity to make it worth his while. The Lord Treasurer calmly replied, that he would seriously consider of what his Lordship

strokes, but blames the management of the poem in general, and calls it a gazette

had said, and endeavour to give no occasion for such reproaches for the future ; but that, in the present case, he took it upon himself to promise, that any gentleman whom his Lordship should name to him, as a person capable of celebrating the late action, should find it worth his while to exert his genius upon that subject. The Lord Halifax, upon this encouragement, named Mr. Addison ; but insisted that the Lord Treasurer himself should send to him. His Lordship promised to do so ; and accordingly desired Mr. Boyle to go to him. Mr. Addison, who was at that time indifferently lodged, was surprized the next morning with a visit from the Chancellor of the Exchequer ; who, after having acquainted him with his business, added, that the Lord Treasurer, to encourage him to enter upon his subject, had already made him one of the commissioners of appeals ; but entreated him to look upon that post only as an earnest of something more considerable.

In

zette in rhyme. The regular march
which is observed from one town to an-
other is certainly a fault ; but surely the
poem abounds in too many beauties †
to

In short, the Chancellor said so many obliging
things, and in so graceful a manner, as gave Mr.
Addison the utmost spirit and encouragement to
begin that poem, which he afterwards published,
and entitled *The Campaign*. The Lord Treasurer
kept the promise he had made by Mr. Boyle : and
Mr. Addison, soon after the publication of his
poem, was preferred to a considerable post."

† To instance but a few lines :

Unbounded courage and compassion join'd,
Temp'ring each other in the victor's mind,
Alternately proclaim him good and great,
And make the hero and the man compleat.
But O, my muse, what numbers wilt thou find
To sing the furious troops in battle join'd !
Methinks I hear the drum's tumultuous sound,
The victor's shouts and dying groans confound,
The dreadful burst of cannon rend the skies,
And all the thunde r of the battle rise.

to be characterised in such slight terms. The poetic fire burns with great brightness in the Campaign; the language is chaste and elegant; and it contains several passages extremely beautiful.

But it was in the prose works of this great man, in which his genius shines with the brightest lustre. His character as an author in general is not inferior to Pope; and the Spectators, and other periodical papers which he wrote, will be

'Twas then great Marlbro's mighty soul was
prov'd,

That in the shock of charging hosts unmov'd,
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Examin'd all the dreadful scenes of war :
In peaceful thought the field of death survey'd,
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspir'd repuls'd battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.

The famous simile of the Angel is known all
Europe over.

read

read and admired as long as the English language exists. They were received with equal applause in almost all the countries of Europe. " The finest geniuses in England, says a French author *, have exerted in the Spectator, all the force of their reflections, all the delicacy of style, and all the fire of imagination that can be conceived. It is an admirable work; and it has preserved a great part of its original graces and beauty in the French translation. There is such a prodigious variety in it, both with regard to the style, and the subjects which it treats of, that we may justly affirm, the French nation has nothing to oppose to this work, that can be considered in all respects equal to it.

* Differtat. sur la Poësie Angloise, in the Journal Litteraire, tome ix. p. 159, 160.

The Tatlers, Spectators and Guardians, have been translated into most of the European languages, and given birth to several papers in imitation of them in foreign countries. The French had for some time their Babilliard, or Tatler, and Mons. Bastide at present writes Le Nouveau Spectateur. The Dutch have to this day their Spectator; and the Germans had for some years together their Guardian. This last paper was printed at Hamburgh, and composed by a society of gentlemen who understood English; they translated several of the Spectators, which had not before appeared in the German language; and this gave their Guardians so great a reputation, that nine or ten thousand of them were usually sold.

When

When † the old Spectator was laid down by those hands which at first composed it, the paper was immediately set on foot again by some of the greatest wits in England, several of whose writings of different kinds had been received with the utmost applause by the public; yet even these gentlemen, to their great surprize, found the thing would not do; and had the good sense not only to drop their design, but to conceal their names. Mr. Addison said upon this occasion, that he looked upon the undertaking to write Spectators, to be like the attempt of Penelope's lovers to shoot in the bow of Ulysses; who soon found that nobody could shoot so well in that bow, but the hand which used to draw it."

† See the Bee, or Universal Weekly Pamphlet, No. i. p. 26, 27.

Amongst the characters in that work, that of Sir Roger de Coverly was the favourite with Mr. Addison; who a little before he laid down the Spectator, foreseeing that some nimble gentleman would catch up his pen the moment he had quitted it, said to an intimate friend, with a certain warmth in his expression, which he was not often guilty of, “ By G—d, I’ll kill Sir Roger, that no-body else may murder him.” Accordingly the whole Spectator, No. 517, consists of nothing else but an account of the Knight’s death, and some moving circumstances which attended it. At another time Sir Richard Steele, in one of his Spectators, having a little injudiciously made the old Knight pick up a loose woman in the Temple cloyster, Mr. Addison was so heartily vexed when he read the

the paper, that he immediately called a coach, went to his friend Sir Richard, and never left him till he had made him promise that he would meddle no more with Sir Roger's character *.

Mr. Addison certainly ranks among the finest geniuses this island ever produced. He has a more refined, decent, judicious, and extensive genius than Pope or Swift. To distinguish this triumvirate from each other, and, like Newton, to discover the different colours in these genuine and meridian rays of literary light, Swift is a singular wit, Pope a correct poet, Addison a great author. Swift looked on wit as the *jus divinum* to dominion and sway in the world; and considered as usurpation,

* See General Dictionary, Art. Addison.

all power that was lodged in persons of less sparkling understandings. This inclined him to tyranny in wit; Pope was somewhat of his opinion, but was for softening tyranny into lawful monarchy; yet were there some acts of severity in his reign. Addison's crown was elective, he reigned by the public voice:

———— Volentes

Per populos dat jura, viamque affectat Olympo.

VIRG.

But as good books are the medicine of the mind, if we should dethrone these authors, and consider them, not in their royal, but their medicinal capacity, might it not then be said, that Addison prescribed a wholesome and pleasant regimen, which was universally relished, and did much good? that Pope preferred a purgative of satire, which, tho' whole-
some,

some, was too painful in its operation ? and that Swift insisted on a large dose of ipecacuanha, which, tho' readily swallowed from the fame of the physician, yet, if the patient had any delicacy of taste, he threw up the remedy, instead of the disease ?

Addison wrote little in verse, much in sweet elegant Virgilian prose ; so let me call it, since Longinus calls Herodotus mere Homeric, and Thucydides is said to have formed his style on Pindar. Addison's compositions are built with the finest materials, in the taste of the ancients, and (to speak his own language) on truly classic ground: and tho' they are the delight of the present age, yet I am persuaded they will receive more justice from posterity. I never read him, but I am struck with such a disheartening
idea

idea of perfection, that I drop my pen. And, indeed, far superior writers should forget his compositions, if they would be greatly pleased with their own.

And yet (perhaps you have not observed it) what is the common language of the world, and even of his admirers, concerning him? They call him an elegant writer. That elegance which shines on the surface of his compositions, seems to dazzle their understanding, and render it a little blind to the depth of sentiment which lies beneath. Thus (hard fate!) he loses reputation with them, by doubling his title to it. On subjects the most interesting, and important, no author of his age has written with greater, I had almost said with equal weight; and they who commend him for his elegance, pay him such a sort of compliment

ment by their abstemious praise, as they would pay to Lucretia, if they should commend her only for her beauty †.

† Conjectures on Original Composition, p. 101.

The same author gives us a curious anecdote concerning him. After a long and manly, but vain struggle with his distemper, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life : But with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came ; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent : After a decent, and proper pause, the youth said, “ Dear Sir ! you sent for me : I believe, and I hope, that you have some commands ; I shall hold them most sacred.” May distant ages, not only hear, but feel, the reply. Forcibly grasping the youth’s hand, he softly said, “ See in what peace a Christian can die.” He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired. Thro’ grace divine, how great is man ! Thro’ divine mercy, how stingless death. Who would not thus expire ? Conjectures on Original Composition, page 104.

7. But

7. But still the great have kindness in reserve,
He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.

These lines are wrote of Dryden, whose funeral was remarkable. There is a very odd anecdote current concerning it.

The day after he died, Dr. Sprat, then bishop of Rochester, and dean of Westminster, sent word to the Lady Elizabeth Howard, Mr. Dryden's widow, that he would make a present of the ground, and all the other abbey fees. The Lord Halifax likewise sent to the Lady Elizabeth, and to Mr. Charles Dryden her son, offering to defray the expence of our poet's funeral, and afterwards to bestow 500l. on a monument in the abbey: which generous offer from both was accepted. Accordingly, on the Sunday following, the company being assembled, the corpse was put into a velvet herse, attended

attended by eighteen mourning coaches. When they were just ready to move, the Lord Jefferies, son of the lord chancellor Jefferies, with some of his rakish companions, coming by, asked, whose funeral it was? and, being told it was Mr. Dryden's, he protested, that he should not be buried in that private manner; that he would himself, with the Lady Elizabeth's leave, have the honour of his interment, and would bestow 1000l. on a monument in the abbey for him. This put a stop to the procession; and Lord Jefferies, with several of the gentlemen who had alighted from the coaches, went up stairs to the Lady Elizabeth, who was sick in bed. His Lordship repeated the purport of what he had said below; but Lady Elizabeth absolutely refusing her consent, he fell on his knees, vowing never to rise till his request was granted.

The

The lady, under a sudden surprize, fainted away : and Lord Jefferies, pretending to have gained her consent, ordered the body to be carried to Mr. Ruffel's, an undertaker in Cheapside, and to be left there till further orders. In the mean time the abbey was lighted up, the ground opened, the choir attending, and the bishop waiting some hours to no purpose for the corpse. The next day Mr. Charles Dryden waited upon Lord Halifax and the bishop, and endeavoured to excuse his mother, by relating the truth ; but they would not hear of any excuse. Three days after, the undertaker, receiving no orders, waited on Lord Jefferies, who turned it off in a jest, pretending, that those who paid any regard to a drunken frolic, deserved no better ; that he remembered nothing at all of the matter, and that they may do
what

what they pleased with the corpse. Upon this the undertaker waited on the Lady Elizabeth, who desired a day to consider what must be done. Mr. Charles Dryden immediately wrote to Lord Jefferies, who returned for answer, that he knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it. Mr. Dryden applied again to Lord Halifax and the bishop of Rochester, who absolutely refused to do any thing in the affair. In this distress, Dr. Garth sent for the corpse to the college of physicians, and proposed a funeral by subscription; which succeeding, about three weeks after Mr. Dryden's decease, Dr. Garth pronounced a Latin oration over his body, which was conveyed from the college, attended by a numerous train of coaches, to Westminster abbey. After the funeral, Mr. Charles Dryden sent

Lord Jefferies a challenge, which was not accepted ; and Mr. Dryden publicly declaring he would watch every opportunity to fight him, his Lordship thought fit to leave the town upon it, and Mr. Dryden never could meet him after.

Gen. Dict.

8. Let Sporus tremble—A. What ? that thing
of filk,

Sporus, that mere white curd of ass's milk ?

Satire or sense, alas ! can Sporus feel ?

Who breaks a butter-fly upon a wheel ?

P. Yet let me flag this bug with gilded wings,

This painted child of dirt that stinks and stings ;

Whose buz the witty and the fair annoys,

Yet wit ne'er tastes, and beauty ne'er enjoys :

So well-bred spaniels civilly delight,

In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.

Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,

As shallow streams run dimpling all the way.

I have

I have inserted the most striking part of this character as an instance of wit and poignant satire. It is worked up with all imaginable art ; and receives an infinite deal of beauty from the epithets, with which he has painted Sporus, *thing of silk, mere white curd of ass's milk, a butter-fly, a bug with gilded wings, a painted child of dirt.* And the simile that concludes the passage is excessively beautiful.

9. Let the two Curls of town and court, abuse
His father, mother, body, soul, and muse.

Every age and nation have their Curls. Monf. de Voltaire speaks with great humour on this subject. " But the most curious secret of all, says he, for an honest bookseller, is to take care to print, at the end of the book he publishes, all the abuse and ribaldry that has

been written against the author. Nothing is better calculated to whet the curiosity of the reader, and to quicken the sale. I remember, among the execrable editions that have been printed in Holland of my pretended works, an artful editor of Amsterdam, who was desirous to sink the credit of an impression printed at the Hague, thought proper to add, by way of appendix, a collection of all the ribaldry he could scrape together, that had been written against me. The first words of this collection called me a snarling cur. I found this book at Magdeburg, in the hands of the post-master, who never ceased telling me what an eloquent piece it was. Lately two worthy booksellers of Amsterdam, after having disfigured, as much as in them lay, the *Henriade*, and my other pieces, did me the honour to acquaint me by letter, that,

that, if I persisted in my intention of permitting a better edition of my works to be published at Dresden, than that which they were then engaged in, they should hold themselves bound in conscience to publish against me a volume of the most atrocious calumnies, on the finest writing-paper, with a large margin, and the most beautiful letter they could procure. They have been as good as their words with me. It is pity such valuable collections should have been buried in oblivion. Formerly, when there were eight or nine hundred thousand volumes fewer in Europe than at present, those pieces of scandal had their effect. People read with extreme relish in Scaglia-
 lier, that Cardinal Bellarmin was an atheist, the reverend father Clarius a drunkard, and that the reverend father

Clotton had sold himself to the Devil.
These were happy days ; but, alas ! every
thing degenerates."

Voltaire's works, vol. xiii. p. 258.

10. O friend ! may each domestic bliss be thine !
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine :
Me, let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep a while one parent from the sky !
On cares like these if length of days attend,
May heaven to bless those days preserve my
friend,
Preserve him social, chearful, and serene,
And just as rich as when he serv'd a *Queen*.

A. Whether that blessing be deny'd or giv'n,
Thus far was right ; the rest belongs to heav'n.

What a noble conclusion is this of the
prologue to the Satires ? These lines
are so excessively pleasing, pathetic, and
poe-

poetical, that I could not forbear inserting the whole passage. Mr. Pope was remarkable for the tenderness of his behaviour towards his mother; many of his letters abound with peculiar instances of his affection for her.

Monf. Rousseau has an original and admirable observation on filial duty.

Il y a des occasions où un fils qui manque de respect à son frere, peut, en quelque sorte, être excusé: mais si, dans quelque occasion que ce fût, un enfant étoit assez dénaturé pour en manquer à sa mere, a celle qui l'a porté dans son sein, qui l'a nourri de son lait, qui, durant des années, s'est oubliée elle-même pour ne s'occuper que de lui, on devroit se hâter d'étouffer ce misérable, comme un monstre indigne de voir le jour. Les meres, dit-on, gâtent leurs

enfans. En cela, sans doute, elles ont tort ; mais moins de tort que vous, peut-être, qui les dépravez. La mere veut que son enfant soit heureux, qu'il le soit dès à présent. En cela elle a raison : quand elle se trompe sur les moyens, il faut l'éclairer. L'ambition, l'avarice, la tyrannie, la fausse prévoyance des peres, leur négligence, leur dure insensibilité, sont cent fois plus funestes aux enfans que l'aveugle tendresse de meres. *Emile, Tome I. p. 4.*

1. What ? like Sir Richard, rumbling, rough,
and fierce,
With arms, and George and Brunswick crow'd
the verse,
Rend with tremendous sound your ears asunder,
With gun, drum, trumpet, blunderbuss and thunder * ?

* Satire i. verse 23.

This

This satire on Blackmore has great humour, and is extremely just. Surely Mr. Locke discovered great want of taste in poetry, when he declared it his opinion, that Sir Richard was as much superior to all other poets, as the eagle soared above the wren. Dryden says, he “ writ to the rumbling of his coach’s wheels.” Pope speaks of him thus in the Dunciad.

But far o’er all, sonorous Blackmore’s strain;
Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
In Tot’nam fields, the Brethren, with amaze,
Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze;
Long Chanc’ry-lane retentive rolls the sound,
And courts to courts return it round and round;
Thames wafts it thence to Rufus’ roaring hall,
And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.
All hail him victor in both gifts of song,
Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long †.

† Dunciad, B. ii. v. 259.

Blackmore wrote no less than six epic poems, Prince Arthur, King Arthur, Eliza, Alfred, the Redeemer, and Job; besides these, he composed the whole book of Psalms, the Creation, Nature of Man, and many more, all void of any poetic fire, languid, prosaic, and almost buried in oblivion. The Creation was the best poem he wrote, but Addison has praised it far more than it deserves. He says †, that the depths of philosophy are there, enlivened with all the charms of poetry; but it would puzzle the most penetrating critic to discover any charms of poetry in so tedious a poem. Dr. Drake satirized him with great poignancy in the following lines:

By nature form'd, by want a pedant made,
Blackmore at first set up the whipping trade;

† Spect: No. 339.

Next

Next quack commenc'd : then fierce with pride
 he swore,
 That tooth-ach, gôut, and corns should be no
 more.

In vain his drugs as well as birch he tried ;
 His boys grew blockheads, and his patients died.

Blackmore was weak enough to abuse
 Pope, and by that means procured him-
 self a place amongst his respectable bre-
 thren in the Dunciad.

2. Peace is my dear delight—not Fleury's more :
 But touch me, and no minister so sore.
 Whoe'er offends, at some unlucky time
 Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme ;
 Sacred to ridicule his whole life long,
 And the sad burthen of some merry song *.

These lines are very beautiful, and
 superior to those of Horace †. No poet
 was

* Verse 75.

† ————— O pater et rex,
 Jupiter, ut pereat positum rubigine telum,

Nec

was ever more severe in his revenge than Pope; but yet it must be confessed that he seldom ridiculed any persons without some reason. The Dunciad is a lasting monument of infamy to that set of hardened dunces, many even of whose very names are now buried in oblivion. In one remarkable instance, however, Mr. Pope thought proper, and with great judgment, to answer an attack, in prose. It seems that Lord Harvey wrote a libel in verse against him, entitled, *An Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court*, which was published in 1733. Pope understanding who was the author of it, answered it in prose,

Nec quisquam noceat cupido mihi pacis! at ille
 Qui me commorit (melius non tangere, clamo)
 Flebit, et insignis tota cantabitur urbe.

But the last of these lines is extremely beautiful and severe.

but

but kept his answer some time in manuscript, with an intention to publish it after his friends had read it. His Lordship being informed that Pope had answered him with a great deal of severity, endeavoured, by several means, to get a sight of the manuscript before it was published, but without effect. He then applied himself to the Queen, who, to oblige him, borrowed the manuscript of Mr. Pope, and shewed it to his Lordship. Harvey was excessively chagrined at the severity of the answer, and sufficiently humbled. He begged of her Majesty to use all her interest with Pope to prevent its being published; for which purpose the Queen ordered a person to speak to him, who assured him that his answer had had effect enough, as my Lord Harvey had seen it, and was excessively sorry for having given the provocation,

cation, and moreover asked Mr. Pope's pardon. Pope hereupon promised the Queen, on his word of honour, not to publish it; but however left it in the power of his executor to do it after his death; and accordingly Dr. Warburton published it at the end of the ninth volume of his edition of his works. The letter, tho' wrote with great temper, is excessively poignant: but his Lordship was ridiculed with infinite wit under the name of Sporus.

From furious Sappho scarce a milder fate,
P--x'd by her love, or libell'd by her hate *.

There are many instances of Pope's making open professions of his friendship, to those very persons he lashed with the utmost severity in his satires. Addi-

* Verse 84.

son is a remarkable one; and Lady M. W. Montague another. I have been often informed that by Sappho is meant that celebrated Lady. Some of his letters to her seem to be full of tenderness and affection for her, and breathe the language of the sincerest friendship. One of them is indeed remarkable for a mixed kind of praise and censure: he seems in one passage to give an oblique dash at her Ladyship's chastity; "Glory, the only pay of generous actions, is now as ill paid as other just debts; and neither Mrs. Macfarland for immolating her lover, nor you for constancy to your Lord, must ever hope to be compared to Lucretia or Portia."

Then follows twenty most brilliant compliments to her face and understanding, and another stroke as good as the former;

former ; “ Lastly, I shall hear how, the first night you lay at Pera, you had a vision of Mahomet’s paradise ; and happily awaked without a soul, from which blessed moment the beautiful body was left at full liberty to perform all the agreeable functions it was made for.”

The conversation, wit, poetry, and adventures of this most accomplished woman, are well known ; she indulged herself in freedoms, which with her management gave a brilliancy to her character among the principal persons of her time : her Town Eclogues, and other small poems, are full of wit and fire, and the versification easy and harmonious : I don’t remember seeing the few following lines in print ; they are an extempore epigram on seeing a picture of General Churchill.

Woe

Woe to the man that's aged fixty-four,
 Unfit for love, unwilling to give o'er;
 A very flesh-fly, hov'ring on the wing,
 Awake to buzz, but not alive to sting.
 Bold where he cannot, backward where he can,
 The teizing ghost of the departed man.

Her Ladyship's travels have been lately published; and certainly are the most entertaining and sprightly relations ever wrote. Never was any thing more easy or more elegant than the letters, the language ever lively and spirited; full of the most pleasing turns, and in short a charming stile: her observations are all new and penetrating, and her painting every where so glowing and animated, as to place every object she describes full before our eyes.

The obligations we are under to her for the practice of inoculation, are great

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H

and

and lasting : few travellers bring home with them so valuable a present for their countries, but her genius made her examine into all the customs of the Turks; and this exotic admirable plant, which at present flourishes here so vigorously, was transplanted by this celebrated woman.

In the beginning of the second satire, gluttony is very finely ridiculed, and the character of Avidien marked with many satirical touches that work it up to a fine pitch of humour.

On morning wings how active springs the mind,
That leaves the load of yesterday behind ?
How easy ev'ry labour it pursues ?
How coming to the poet ev'ry muse * ?

I hardly know in the English language
a more beautiful line than the first of

* Verse 80.

these four : they are all very good, but that is far more noble than the

Alter ubi dicto citius curata sopori
Membra dedit, vegetus præscripta ad munia surgit,

of Horace. In the first epistle the following lines are excellent:

Well, but the poor—The poor have the same
itch ;
They change their weekly barber, weekly news,
Prefer a new japanner to their shoes,
Discharge their garrets, move their beds, and run
(*They know not whither*) in a chaise and one ;
They hire their sculler, and when once aboard,
*Grow sick, and damn the climat.—like a lord **.

This piece of satire against a foible so common in the world is as just as it is beautiful, and much more spirited than the original. How often do we see

H 2

people

* Verse 155.

people of no extraction, on the least accession of wealth, give themselves all the airs which the dullest spirit of mimicking their betters can dictate.

For, mark th' advantage ; just so many score
Will gain a wife, with half as many more,
Procure her beauty, make that beauty chaste,
And then such friends—as cannot fail to last †.

The last of these lines is excellent. The Rambler speaks very sensibly of the absurdity of friendship that is not natural. Every man must have remarked, says he, the facility with which the kindness of others is sometimes gained by those to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almost into different species, which regard one another for the most part with

† Verse 77. Ep. vi.

scorn and malignity. Each of the classes of the human race has desires, fears, and conversation, vexations and merriment, peculiar to itself; cares which another cannot feel; pleasures which he cannot partake; and modes of expressing every sensation which he cannot understand. That frolick which shakes one man with laughter, will convulse another with indignation; the strains of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence †.

1. Sure fate of all, beneath whose rising ray
Each star of meaner merit fades away!
Oppress'd we feel the beam directly beat,
Those suns of glory please not till they set ‡.

These noble lines are truly sublime,
and most admirably imitated from the

† Rambler, Vol. iv. No. 160.

‡ Book II. Ep. i. verse 19.

original. It is a melancholy reflection, that envy is so often and universally able to bear down the greatest merit. 'Tis death only that silences the voice of calumny: when the world has lost its brightest jewels, we recollect their vast, but unrewarded deserts.

2. But for the wits of either Charles's days,
The mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease ;
Sprat, Carew, Sedley, and a hundred more,
(Like twinkling stars the miscellanies o'er)
One simile that solitary shines
In the dry desert of a thousand lines,
Or lengthen'd thought that gleams thro' many a
page,
Has sanctify'd whole poems for an age. *

Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose the reign of Charles II. was the Augustan age in England. But the coarseness of the dramatic pieces that were exhibited on the opening of the theatre

* Verse 107.

theatre at the restoration, may be easily accounted for, when we consider how natural it was for the people after being deprived so long of the pleasures of the stage, to swallow with greediness every production of pleasantry and humour. And indeed even the court itself encouraged the most absurd extravagance and folly in the representations on the theatre †. Charles himself possessed great humour and some taste; but whether it was owing to the negligence of his disposition, or the want of generosity, he certainly was far from being an encourager of polite literature. The excessive licentiousness of his court obstructed its progress. There are many instances of the King's want of li-

† The Rehearsal of the Duke of Buckingham exposed with a fine spirit of ridicule these wild productions of folly, and partly corrected the vicious taste of the nation.

berality in rewarding literary merit. The royal cause received vast advantage from Hudibras, and Charles himself admired that work ; but yet he let Butler, who was a man of an unexceptionable character, die in want. Dryden, it is well known, could never procure such an establishment as might have exempted him from the necessity of writing for bread. The celebrated Otway, who was a royalist, and one of the finest geniuses of the age, could not even procure bread by his writings, and had the singular fate of dying literally of hunger *. These instances

* Otway, whose delicacy would not permit him to borrow small sums, was driven to the utmost necessity. He ventured at last out of his lurking-place, almost naked and shivering, and went into a coffee-house on Tower-Hill, where he saw a gentleman of whom he had some knowledge, and of whom he solicited the loan of a shilling. The gentle-

instances throw a dark shade over the character of Charles II. whose conduct

gentleman was quite shocked to see the author of *Venice Preserved* begging bread ; and compassionately put into his hand a guinea. Mr. Otway having thanked his benefactor, retired, and purchased a roll ; as his stomach was full of wind by excess of fasting, the first mouthful choaked him, and instantaneously put a period to his miserable days. Illiberal abuse has too often been thrown on men who wrote for bread. If heroes and patriots constitute the first column of national glory, authors of genius constitute the second : and if England has produced a Sackville, a Bacon, a Raleigh, a Greville, a Selden, a Harrington, a Hyde, a Sheffield, an Ashley-Cooper, a Boyle, a Granville, &c. who did not write for bread, it has also produced other writers as eminent, who did ; and of whom some, to the eternal disgrace of all our national pretensions to generosity and humanity, died for want of it.

Mr. Oldmixon perhaps will not be admitted as one of these ; and yet his merits as a party-writer,

duct was compared with great disadvantage to that of his cotemporary
Lewis

writer, his connections with the famed *professor* of *politicks*, and *Philanthropy* of Pall-Mall, and his submitting to labour at the press like a horse in the mill, till he became as blind and as wretched, ought to have been, what they were not, so many preservatives from the accumulation of miseries which beset him in his old age, when he stood most in need of consolation.

But Mr. Sale, translator of the Koran, and author of the oriental articles in the Universal History, might be compared to the phoenix in all but this, that he did not leave a successor behind him ; and yet such were his distresses, that he often wanted a second shirt, and was often obliged to the first friend he could find for the meal of the day. How different his fate from that of a certain prelate deceased, who, on the credit of a single sermon (for though he printed two, the last was but a hash of the first) had the good luck to become the head of his order ?

If we had a Shakespeare, a Milton, or a Newton,

Lewis XIV. whose liberality to the learned of all Europe has been so highly

ton, now existing amongst us, who should come into what is *called* good company in dirty linen for want of clean ; and a Charteris, a Lascelles, a Lowther, a Walters, or a Crästein, out of fordidness did the same, merely to save the charge of washing, the latter would be courted and caressed, and the former would hardly be acknowledged ; the most notorious abuse of wealth not being able to render the abuser contemptible, or talents the most sublime to render poverty otherwise.

Poor Amhurst ! after having been the drudge of his party for the best part of twenty years together, was as much forgot in the famous compromise of 1742, as if he had never been born !— And when he died of what is called a broken heart, which happened within a few months afterwards, became indebted to the charity of his very bookseller for a grave.—A grave not to be traced now, because no otherwise to be distinguished, than

highly celebrated. Dryden and Otway were the two greatest geniuses that appeared in this reign. Rochester's indecency clouds all his works, but he had a genius finely turned for satire. The Duke of Buckingham was celebrated for his Rehearsal; and the Earls of Mulgrave, Dorset, and Roscommon, were writers of taste; but their compositions want both energy and spirit. The same may be said of the Marquis of Halifax, who would have been a good writer if he had had leisure to cultivate his genius. Sir William Temple, says the ingenious Mr. Hume, is almost the only

than by the freshness of the turf, borrowed from the next common to cover it*.

Case of Authors, p. 3.

* Mr. M——, his fellow labourer in another excellent paper, called Common Sense, by marrying a woman of fortune, was put into a condition of laughing at the ingratitude he also experienced on the same occasion,

one,

one, who kept himself altogether unpol-
luted by that inundation of vice and li-
centiousness, which overwhelmed the na-
tion. The stile of this author, though
extremely negligent, and even mixed
with foreign idioms, is agreeable and in-
teresting. That mixture of vanity, which
appears in his works, is rather a recom-
mendation to them. By means of it,
we enter into acquaintance with the cha-
racter of the author, full of honour and
humanity; and fancy that we are en-
gaged, not in the perusal of a book, but
in conversation with a companion*.

To what I have here said concerning
the bad taste which prevailed during the
reign of Charles II. I shall only add,
that nothing can be a stronger argument

* Hist. of Great Brit. vol. ii. p. 454.

to strengthen these opinions, than the neglect of the *Paradise Lost* during this period. Milton never enjoyed in his life-time the reputation he deserved. He had been deeply engaged with the fanatics in the preceding reign, and had even prostituted his pen in theological controversy. This so far blinded the nation, that they never perceived the immense merit of that performance. Having got his poem licenced for the press, he could sell the copy for no more than fifteen pounds, the payment of which depended on the sale of three numerous impressions *. Lord Somers, that noble patron of polite learning, brought it into some reputation, by publishing a good edition of it about twenty years after the

† Vide Life of Milton, prefixed to Fenton's 12mo edit. p. 22.

author's death. Whitlocke * talks of one Milton, as he calls him, a blind man, who was employed in translating a treaty with Sweden into Latin. These forms of expression are amusing to posterity, who consider how obscure Whitlocke himself, though lord-keeper and ambassador, and indeed a man of great ability and merit, has become in comparison of Milton †.

3. Then

* P. 633. and quoted by Hume, vol. ii. p. 126.

† Mr. Walpole says very justly, "One is amazed at hearing the age of Charles the Second called polite: because the presbyterians and religionists had affected to call every thing by a scripture name, the new court affected to call every thing by its own name. That court had no pretensions to politeness, but by its resemblance to another age, which called its own grossness polite, the age of Aristophanes. Would a Scythian have been civilized by the Athenian stage, or a Hottentot by the drawing-room of Charles the Second?"

3. Then marble soften'd into life grew warm,
And yielding metal flow'd to human form.

These two beautiful lines describe the art of sculpture in a fine manner; that noble art, which is so little inferior to painting in the works of many of the antient statuaries. In their admirable hands marble might well be said to *soften into life*, since their imitations were so wonderfully expressive. The Greek artists carried sculpture to such a height of perfection, that one can hardly be doubtful of the merit of their painting: yet several critics have disputed their

Second? The characters and anecdotes being forgot, the state-poems of that time are a heap of senseless ribaldry, scarcely in rhyme, and more seldom in metre. When satyrs were brought to court, no wonder the graces would not trust themselves there.

Calat. of Roy. and Nob. Auth. vol. ii. p. 44.
excel-

excellency in that sister art with great warmth: the ingenious Mr. Webb places them even above the modern painters, and ranks Apelles as the greatest that ever existed. But in sculpture their superiority is confessed by all mankind: they treated some subjects with prodigious success, which could scarce be thought proper for the art; and those which aided their genius shine to this day as monuments of their infinite invention and amazing execution.

4. Lely on animated canvas stole
The sleepy eye, that spoke the melting soul.

Lely preferred in almost all his faces a languishing air, long eyes, and a drowsy sweetness peculiar to himself; for which the critics reckon him a mannerist, and that he retained a little of the

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I

greenish

greenish cast in his complexions, not easily forgetting the colours he had used in his landscapes; which last fault, how true soever at first, it is well known he left off in his latter days *. But whatever of this kind may be objected against this great painter, it is certain that his works are in great esteem abroad, as well as here, and they are both equally valued and envied. He had an original manner of painting the landscapes in his own pictures. He was likewise a good history-painter, as many pieces among us can show. His crayon drafts are also admirable, and are commonly reckoned the most valuable of his pieces. Lely, in his younger days, was very desirous to finish the course of his studies in Italy; but being hindered

* De Piles's Lives of the Painters, p. 403.

from

from going thither by the great business he was perpetually involved in, he resolved to make himself amends, by getting the best drawings, prints, and paintings of the most celebrated Italian hands. This he set about so industriously, that at length he obtained what he sought after, and may well be said to have had the best chosen collection of any of his time. Among these we must reckon the better part of the Arundel collection, which he had from that family, many of the drawings whereof were sold at prodigious rates at his death, bearing upon them his usual mark of P. L. What advantage he had from this expedient, may sufficiently appear by that wonderful stile in painting, which he acquired by his daily conversing with the works of those great men. In his correct draft and beautiful colouring,

but more especially in the graceful airs of his heads, and the pleasing variety of his postures, together with the gentle and loose management of the draperies, he excelled most of his predecessors, and will be a lasting pattern to all succeeding artists.

5. Waller was smooth ; but Dryden taught
 to join
 The varying verse, the full resounding line,
 The long majestic march, and energy divine *.

Few of Waller's poetic pieces are moving, not even those that are wrote on the subject of love, and to the ladies he admired. They are but ingenious trifles. Of his more serious poems, the panegyric on Cromwel is composed with more force than any of his other pieces ; and his poem to Charles I. on his danger,

* Verse 257.

when

when prince, in the road of St. Andero, is wrote with some spirit ; but his divine poetry has hardly the least spark of elevation or fire. But notwithstanding this criticism, the English language is greatly obliged to him ; few writers before his time had composed in a smooth and polished stile ; but Waller was so exact in his choice of words, that his poetry at this day contains very few obsolete ones. The harmony, softness, and rhyme in his poems make them more generally read at present than the greater part of the works of his cotemporaries. In short, Waller was a man of wit and ingenuity ; but his poetry does not contain any strokes either of the sublime or pathetic †.

Pope

† Charles II. on Waller's presenting him a copy of verses in his praise, reproached him with

Pope made Dryden his model in the art of versification. The English language can scarce produce any numbers more har-

not writing with so much energy and fire, as when he had applauded the usurper: " Sir, replied Waller to the King, We poets succeed better in fiction than in truth."

On a beaucoup entendu parler du celebre Waller en France. Mr. de la Fontaine, St. Evremond, & Bayle ont faits son eloge; mais on ne connoit de lui que son nom. Il eut à Londres la meme reputation que Voiture eut à Paris, & je crois qu'il la meritoit mieux. Voiture vint dans un tems où l'on sortoit de la barbarie, & où l'on étoit encore dans l'ignorance. On vouloit avoir de l'esprit, & on n'en avoit point encore. On cherchoit des tours en lieu de pensées. Les faux brillans se trouvent plus aisément que les pierres precieuses. Voiture né avec un genie frivole & facile, fut le premier qui brilla dans cette aurore de la literature Françoise. S'il étoit venu apres les grands hommes qui ont illustré le siecle de Louis XIV. ou il auroit

harmonious and noble than those of this great man in some of his poems ; parti-

roit été inconnu, ou on n'auroit parlé de lui que pour le mépriser, ou il auroit corrigé son stile. Mr. Despreaux le louë, mais c'est dans ses premieres satires, c'est dans le tems que le gout de Despreaux n'étoit pas encore formé : il étoit jeune & dans l'age ou l'on juge des hommes par la reputation, & non pas par eux memes. D'ailleurs, Mr. Despreaux étoit souvent bien injuste dans ses loüanges & dans ses censures. Il loüoit Segrais que personne ne lit, il insultoit Quinault que tout le monde sçait par cœur, & il ne dit rien de la Fontaine. Waller meilleur que Voiture, n'étoit pas encore parfait. Ses ouvrages galans respirent la grace, mais la negligence les fait languir, & souvent les pensées fausses les defigurent. Les Anglois n'étoient pas encore parvenus de son tems à écrire avec correction. Ses ouvrages serieux sont pleins d'une vigueur qu'on n'attendrait pas de la mollesse de ses autres pieces. Il a fait un éloge funebre de Cromwel, qui avec ses defauts passe pour un chef d'œuvre. Lettres sur les Anglois, p. 188.

cularly many lines in his Absalom and Achitophel, his fables, and some speeches to be met with here and there in his tragedies. His noble and original ode I have spoke of already; that piece alone would have rendered the memory of Dryden immortal *. I hardly know any poet whose works are, in general, so unequal. The poems which I have mentioned above, and some few others, are excellent; but as for his dramatic pieces, they are almost the refuse of the English language. His translations are performed with spirit, and bear many marks of the genius of Dryden; but they are too incorrect, and were rather the offspring of necessity, than of leisure and reflection.

6. O you!

* His prologues, for which he was so famous, are wrote with an infinite deal of wit and humour; few since his time have equalled them.

6. O you ! whom Vanity's light bark conveys
 On Fame's mad voyage by the wind of praise,
 With what a shifting gale your course you ply,
 For ever sunk too low, or borne too high !
 Who pants for glory finds but short repose,
 A breath revives him, or a breath o'erthrows.

Nothing can be more beautiful than these lines on the vanity of fame. Mr. Johnson has an observation on the same subject, which is worthy of being quoted. " It is long before we are convinced of the small proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind ; or learn how few can be interested in the fortune of any single man ; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention ; to how small extent the brightest blaze of merit can be spread amidst the mists of business and of folly ; and how soon it is clouded
 by

by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations, will easily out-live all noisy and popular reputation: he may be celebrated for a time by the public voice, but his actions and his name will soon be considered as remote and unaffecting, and be rarely mentioned but by those whose alliance gives them some vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration. It seems not to be sufficiently considered how little renown can be admitted in the world. Mankind are kept perpetually busy by their fears or desires, and have not more leisure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themselves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving some refuge from calamity, or in shortening the way to some new possession, they seldom suffer their thoughts to wander

wander to the past or future; none but a few solitary students have leisure to enquire into the claims of antient heroes or sages, and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents, shrink at last into cloisters or colleges. Nor is it certain, that even of these dark and narrow habitations, these last retreats of fame, the possession will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature, very few extend their views beyond some particular science, and the greater part seldom enquire, even in their own profession, for any authors, but those whom the present mode of study happens to force upon their notice; they desire not to fill their minds with unfashionable knowledge, but contentedly resign to oblivion those books which they now find censured or neglected. The hope of
fame

fame is necessarily connected with such considerations as must abate the ardor of confidence, and repress the vigour of pursuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now possessed by another ; for there are already names of every class sufficient to employ all that will desire to remember them ; and surely he that is pushing his predecessors into the gulph of obscurity, cannot but sometimes suspect that he must himself sink in like manner, and, as he stands upon the same precipice, be swept away with the same violence *.

To these grave and manly observations, I cannot but add the following little imagined anecdote.

* Rambler, vol. iii. Numb. 146.

A Chinese who had long studied the works of Confucius, who knew the characters of fourteen thousand words, and could read a great part of every book that came in his way, once took it into his head to travel into Europe, and observe the customs of a people, whom he thought not very much inferior, even to his own countrymen, in the arts of refining upon every pleasure. Upon his arrival at Amsterdam, his passion for letters naturally led him to a bookseller's shop; as he could speak a little Dutch, he civilly asked the bookseller for the immortal Ilixofon. The bookseller assured him he had never heard the book mentioned before. "What, have you never heard of that immortal poet (returned the other much surprized) that light of the eyes, that favourite of kings, that
rose

rose of perfection? I suppose you know nothing of the immortal Fipsihihi, second cousin to the moon?" "Nothing at all indeed, Sir," (returned the other.)

"Alas! (cries our traveller) to what purpose, then, has one of them fasted to death, and the other offered himself up as a sacrifice to the Tartarean enemy, to gain a renown which has never travelled beyond the precincts of China?"

7. Let me for once presume t'instruct the times,
To know the poet from the man of rhymes :
'Tis he, who gives my breast a thousand pains,
Can make me feel each passion that he feigns ;
Inrage, compose, with more than magic art,
With pity and with terror tear my heart ;
And snatch me o'er the earth, or through the air,
To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

This is a noble description of the true poet ; but no man whose talents border

* Bee.

rather.

rather on taste and correctness, than the original fire of genius, will come under the definition. Homer and Pindar among the antients, and Shakespear among the moderns, excel all mankind in this admirable and truly poetic art.

Homer places the scene of action and his heroes immediately before our eyes, and we are carried away by the impetuosity of his invention: and Shakespear, with the most wonderful art, penetrates our very souls, and impresses every passion most irresistibly in the hearts of his readers. Such are the effects of true poetry: whether those of painting and music are greater, has long been a dispute among the critics. Some very ingenious men have been warm advocates for painting, and others for music: if considered merely as imitations, poetry is undoubtedly

edly the most excellent, contains the greatest variety of powers, and paints objects, characters, passion, and sentiments, which neither of her siller arts can approach to. It is true indeed, that besides what is done by poetry, there is some idea of character, which even painting can communicate. Thus there is no doubt, but that such a countenance may be found by painters for Æneas, as would convey upon view a mild, humane, and yet a brave disposition. But then this idea would be vague and general. It would be concluded, only in the gross, that the hero was good. As to that system of qualities peculiar to Æneas only, and which alone *properly constitutes his true and real character*, this would still remain a secret, and be no way discoverable. For how deduce it from the mere lineaments of a countenance ! Or,
if

if it were deducible, how few spectators would there be found so sagacious? It is here, therefore, that recourse must be had; not to painting, but to poetry. So accurate a conception of character can be gathered only from a *succession of various, and yet consistent actions*; a succession, enabling us to conjecture, what the person of the drama will do in the future, from what already he has done in the past. Now, to such an imitation poetry only is equal; because it is not bounded, like painting, to short, and, as it were, instant events, but may imitate subjects of any duration whatever †.

The ingenious Mr. Webb justly observes, that “the variety and force of our sentiments, particularly in the pa-

† Harris's Three Treatises, p. 91.

thetic, must depend on the variety and nature of their motives. In this the painter is extremely confined; for among the infinite turns and workings of the mind, which may be expressed by words, and become the springs of sentiments, there are so few to which he can give a shape or being, and his indications of peculiar and characteristic feelings are so vague and undecisive, that his expressions, like their motives, must be obvious and general *.

If Painting be inferior to Poetry, Music, considered as an imitative art, must be greatly inferior to Painting; for as Music has no means of explaining the motives of its various impressions, its imitations of the Manners and Passions must

* Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry, p. 102.

be extremely vague and undecisive: for instance, the tender and melting tones which may be expressive of the passion of Love, will be equally in unison with the collateral feelings of Benevolence, Friendship, Pity, and the like.—Again, how are we to distinguish the rapid movements of Anger, from those of Terror, Distraction, and all the violent agitations of the soul? But let Poetry co-operate with Music, and specify the motive of each particular impression, we are no longer at a loss; we acknowledge the agreement of the sound with the idea, and general impressions become specific indications of the Manners and the Passions*.

In respect to the effects of these three arts in moving the passions, it is diffi-

* Ibid.

cult to decide which is superior ; and those who have given the preference to particular ones, only describe their own tastes ; and this point depends almost entirely on the different fancies of individuals. That poetry has a power over the passions, every one must be sensible. Many sublime passages are there which lift the soul to aim at heroism and greatness ; pathetic ones, that melt us into pity : the very reading of some tragedies display the power of the poet to turn and wind our passions as he will. He infuses into our minds every movement of sentiment and affection which best suits his purpose : we rage with fury, burn with revenge, or melt with love. From the most impassioned state of mind he penetrates our hearts with all the soft feelings of compassion and benevolence. In one word, poetry indubitably contains the several

veral powers of eloquence, painting, and music—although there are *some subjects* in which the picture of an action is much more striking than the description of it ; and there are also some few passions which music may imitate to such perfection as to rival poetry ; but this is more doubtful.

That painting can make great impressions on the mind, must be acknowledged by all. There are more instances than one to be met with in history of this kind, and such as display its powers very evidently.—A Picture, says Quintilian, a silent and uniform address, yet penetrates so deeply into our inmost affections, that it seems often to exceed even the powers of eloquence *. We

• *Pictura, tacens opus & habitus semper ejusdem, sic in intimos penetrat affectus, ut ipsam vim dicendi nonnunquam superare videatur.*

cannot doubt, says Mr. Webb, the sincerity of this decision, if we consider the character of the person from whom it comes. Cicero was equally sensible of the powers of the pencil, and often sets them in competition with those of his favourite art. Their effects are sometimes wonderful. It is said that Alexander trembled and grew pale, on seeing a picture of Palamedes betrayed to death by his friends; it bringing to his mind a stinging remembrance of his treatment of Aristonicus. Portia could bear with an unshaken constancy her last separation from Brutus; but when she saw, some hours after, a picture of the parting of Hector and Andromache, she burst into a flood of tears: full as seemed her sorrow, the painter suggested new ideas of grief, or impressed more strongly her own.

I have somewhere met with a pretty story of an Athenian courtesan, who, in the midst of a riotous banquet with her lovers, accidentally cast her eye on the portrait of a philosopher that hung opposite to her seat: the happy character of temperance and virtue struck her with so lively an image of her own unworthiness, that she instantly quitted the room; and returning home became ever after an example of temperance, as she had been before of debauchery. You might tax me with doing injustice to the present times, were I to draw all my proofs from the antient: I appeal therefore to yourself, who have had an opportunity to prove it, whether you could look on the death of Germanicus, as painted by Poussin, without feeling a generous indignation at the cruelty of his oppressor,

and an equal compassion for unhappy virtue. The representation of a plague by the same author, melts the soul into a tender participation of human miseries : These impressions end not here ; they give a turn to the mind advantageous to society ; every argument of sorrow, every object of distress, renews the same soft vibrations, and quickens us to acts of humanity and benevolence *.

The powers which are justly due to music are as well known as universally allowed. Its powers, says Sir William Temple, are either felt or known by all men, and are allowed to work strangely upon the mind and the body, the passions and the blood ; to raise joy and grief, to give pleasure and pain, to cure

* See Mr. Webb on Painting, p. 34.

diseases,

diseases, and the mortal sting of the tarantula; to give motions to the feet as well as the heart, to compose disturbed thoughts, to assist and heighten devotion itself. We need no recourse to the fables of Orpheus and Amphion, or the force of their music upon fishes and beasts; 'tis enough that we find the charming of serpents, and the cure or allay of an evil spirit or possession attributed to it in sacred writ*.

Athenæus, and Capella, have preserved a vast variety of instances of the prodigious effects of the antient music; the power which it has over us, says Macrobius, is so great, that those who sound our military instruments, strike up a proper air for exciting our courage,

* Sir W. Temple of Poetry, vol. 1. p. 235.

when

when we are led to the charge ; whereas they play one of an opposite character when we are called off to a retreat. Symphonies inflame us, divert us, disturb us, and even lull us to sleep. They likewise calm our minds, and afford us comfort under our bodily afflictions and disorders †.

However, we may very justly suppose, that these great effects which have so often resulted from this most captivating art, were the united efforts of both poetry and music : for it is beyond all doubt,

† Ita denique omnis habitus animæ cantibus gubernatur, ut ad bellum progressui, & item receptui canatur, cantu & excitante & rursus sedante virtutem. Dat somnos adimitque, necnon curas immittit & retrahit, iram suggerit, clementiam suadet. Corporum quoque morbis medetur. Macrobius, in somn. Scipionis, lib. 2. cap. 2...

that

that by far the most astonishing powers are the produce of this union; which indeed may be guided by a skilful hand to the promoting every noble and pleasing virtue.

Let us imagine, says Mr. Moor, at the famous feast of Alexander, that the hand, the voice, and the words of Timotheus, had been directed by a Socrates; what a glorious triumph might music, as we may well suppose, have gained on such an occasion! Timotheus, instead of possessing Alexander with the brutal madness of revenge, might have inspired him with the divine enthusiasm of benevolence; instead of making him rush like a fury to burn a noble city, he might have roused him like a hero to some god-like act of goodness. The breast of the
man,

man, who could be made to feel so tender a pity for the fate of his enemy the King of Persia, might have been as easily softened into a generous regret for the misery he had brought upon the Greeks. Those tears which he shed for the calamities of Darius, whom he could not recall to life, this great master of the power of music might have changed into remorse for the destruction of Thebes, and transported the Macedonian into an immediate vow of releasing the Grecians from the bondage in which he then held them. And thus Alexander, instead of snatching up a torch, like a Demon from hell, to burn the imperial seat of the monarchs of Asia, would have risen like a god, to proclaim liberty and independence to the most generous spirited people in the world.

Such

Such being the respective powers of these three admirable arts, it is a new enquiry which speaks most forcibly to the passions: an enquiry of curiosity rather than utility. As it must depend on the taste of the person who decides such a question, it must remain the mere opinion of every individual. If I may venture to hazard one, I should apprehend that each art has its peculiar and superior excellence. 1. Poetry will ever be mistress of the strongest impressions, which are the result of a concatenation of various effects, drawn to any length of composition; and also in short imitations of those subjects which are not adapted to the genius of the other two arts.

For instance, in the characters of Hector and Lear, the musician can give us

no character in his sounds ; the painter may, in a long series of a multitude of pieces, paint the chief actions of Hector's life ; but this is a supposition too extended, it is beyond his art to interest us in his favour, by displaying all the amiable traits in his character, and his very sentiments on particular occasions. This is the poet's province ; and from such a combination of images, and such a variety of strokes, he interests us to such a degree for him as to have our passions at his command. There are several strokes in Lear, which are yet more to my purpose. The reader recollects that pathetic one, "*I gave you all !*" which painting could not express otherwise, than by giving the old man a very moving countenance, which must be expressive of a great many different

ferent emotions; the painter could not vary the features for both that and another—*"Pray do not mock me,"* and also several others, all essentially different.

2. Painting is superior to either, in the representation of any personages unaffected by passions, or the delineation of an emotion or passion, which displays itself in a characteristical, immediate, and peculiar manner in the countenance, in consequence of an action.

Several instances of this may be produced, particularly in description. I apprehend the finest in the world cannot equal Titian's naked Venus lying on a bed, holding a branch of flowers in one hand, the other falling negligently before her. The sight of this picture warms
the

the passions far more than any description ; and the imitation of painting will always be most perfect, in the representation of single figures employed in an action not complex ; for instead of imitating by words, which are but signs of our ideas, it presents the object immediately to our senses. The choice of Paris, Venus attiring by the graces, &c. &c. are therefore subjects more proper for painting than poetry ; and in respect of the delineation of passion, a woman taken in adultery, as it exhibits the sudden surprise, shame, and that mixture of passions, which strictly rises in the guilty mind, and show themselves in the face, is quite in the province of painting : Susannah appearing to answer the charge of adultery gave Mons. Coypel an opportunity of expressing a certain nobleness of

of soul, an innocence and tranquillity in her countenance, which poetry could not reach. Alexander looking at his physician, and drinking the potion, is another of the painter's subjects.

3. Music can only imitate certain emotions and passions, but can give no idea of character: when used to raise those affections in the mind to which its genius is adapted, it is superior in its effects to either poetry or painting.

To explain this assertion, I should observe, that we must not expect any minute distinctions of passion (as pity from benevolence, &c. &c.) in the several imitations of music; but if the disturbed, unsettled, and unhappy mind is to be lulled into a placid serenity, neither poetry nor painting is near so likely to effect

it as music ; the delicate, soft, tender tones of melting harmony, dissipate even grief itself, and lap the soul into an elysium of tranquillity *. — If the enfeebled melancholy mind is to be roused from its low state, the blood to flow with ra-

* Breathe the divine enchanting rapture
Of love ; and in a pleasing slumber lull
The soften'd senses.

Est-il un art plus aimable que la musique ? En est-il un qui regne plus puissamment & plus agréablement sur nos ames ? Elle eleve, elle anime, elle effraye, elle touche, elle attriste, elle égaye ; elle agit avec violence, elle émeut avec douceur : Arbitre de nos passions, source perpetuelle de nos innocens plaisirs. Les anciens peignoient la beauté accompagnée de trois graces. Sans doute, l'une sourioit, l'autre dançoit ; & la plus aimable de toutes meloit les sons d'un luth flatteur à une voix brillante. Socrate même céderoit à Venus quand elle unit les accens d'Erato aux accords enchanteurs d'Euterpe. *Considérations sur les Révolutions des Arts, par Meiguan, p. 232.*

pidity,

pidity, the animal spirits to mount into the fire of ardor, anger, ambition, or any warm passion ; such also is the musician's province. Let the reader recollect the effect which many of Handel's choruses have, which cannot be heard without the greatest emotion ; particularly in Alexander's feast " The princes applaud with a furious joy ;" and above all others the concluding chorus in the Messiah. If we go to these oratorio's in any disposition of mind, however low or sunk, their effect will appear in the strongest manner ; nor can we be masters of our passions, while such powerful notes almost tear us from ourselves *.

Such

* It may be said in the instances which I have quoted, that music in them borrows the aid of poetry ; but in the most of the choruses, the effect arises from the music alone ; and, I am fully per-

Such being the several distinct powers of poetry, painting and music, the union of the first and last will always be attended with the greatest effects, which are then irresistible ; for the poetry explains those little distinctions which music cannot, and giving the reader an idea of several passions and emotions which the music impresses, renders its force complete. The finest instances of this is, the Alexander's feast of the immortal Handel.

I have often thought what vast effects might be the result of these three arts

suaded, would be attended with the same, if there were no voices, for they are in general so drowned in the instruments, that it is difficult to distinguish the words, though they add greatly to the general harmony : never were any compositions greater than the two I have mentioned.

united

united with that of dancing *. If we may suppose such a union to set off beauty in its brightest colours, how could the soul of man be proof against such bewitching charms of beauty, motion, numbers, sound and colours, all conspiring at the same instant to overcome him by the warmth of their impressions†?

Sure

* Quintilian says, *Cum valeant multum verba per se, & vox propriam vim adjiciat rebus, & gestus motusque significet aliquid, profecto perfectum quiddam, cum omnia coierint, fieri necesse est.*

Book x.—3.

† Can there be supposed a more delightful situation, than that person, whose soul experiences at one and the same time the most lively impressions of painting, music, poetry and dancing, all united to charm it? Alas! why is such a situation so seldom compatible with virtue?

Batteux's Principles of Lit. vol. i. p. 56.

Plutarch, speaking of music, does not attribute any such effects to it. A man, says he, who has

L 3

learnt

Sure that mind that could withstand such a combination of enchanting images must be harder than adamant. It has been often asserted, that the fine arts are no friends to a strict virtue, but I apprehend this opinion arose from the loose lives of many of their votaries : I leave it to the reader to judge, whether such a union of softening powers as I just mentioned, would be likely to impress on the mind of the spectator sentiments of a rigid virtue, or an effeminate delicacy.

learned music from his infancy, can never fail of having a taste for what is good, and consequently a hatred of what is bad, even in things that belong not to music ; he will never dishonour himself by any meanness. He will be useful to his country, careful in private life : all his actions and words will be governed by the rules of discretion, and bear the characters of decency, moderation, and order.

A warm and lively imagination is almost always united with warm passions; those sublime geniuses, whose works charm the world, were never men of a warm temperature. Perhaps painting requires as warm an imagination as either of them, and the professors of that charming art have many of them been men of violent passions. The famous Raphael died of a debauch at the age of thirty-seven *. Annibal Carrache's debauches at

* One day after he had abandoned himself to women with excess, he was taken very ill of a burning fever; and the physicians, from whom he concealed the true cause of his distemper, having dealt by him as if he had a pleurisy, quite extinguished the little fire that was left in his body. He died on the same day that he was born, Good-Friday, anno 1520. Cardinal Bembo wrote his epitaph, which is to be seen upon his tomb in the church of the

at Naples, whither he retired for the recovery of his health, brought a distemper upon him, of which he died in 1609. As in his life he had imitated Raphael in his works, so he seems to have copied that great master in the cause and manner of his death : it being too common, says an ingenious writer, for men, who excel in the fine arts, to be subject to the amorous passion. Giorgione was not exempt from it. He fell extremely in love with a young beauty at Venice, who was no less charmed with him, and submitted to be his mistress. She fell ill of the plague ; but not suspecting it to be so, admitted Giorgione to her bed, where the infection seizing him, they both died

Rotunda at Rome : two verses of it are admirable :

Ille hic est Raphael, timuit, quo sospite, vinci

Rerum magna parens, & moriente mori.

De Piles, p. 3.

in

in 1511, he being about thirty-three years of age.

Several great poets have also been a little remarkable for the warmth of their passions. Alcæus was so amorous (says Scipio Gentilis) that he compares himself to a hog, who whilst he is eating one acorn, devours another with his eyes : “ So is it with me (says he) whilst I enjoy one girl, I am wishing for another.” He was much addicted to the Greek vice, the love of boys. The name of his favourite was Lycus, of whom Horace speaks in the following passage.

Qui ferox bello, tamen inter arma,
Sive jactatam religaret udo
Litore navim,
Liberum, & Mufas, Veneremque, & illi
Semper hærentem puerum canebat,
Et Lycum, nigris oculis, nigroque
Crine decorum. O decus

O decus Phœbi, & dapibus supremi

Grata testudo Jovis, O laborum

Dulce lenimen, mihi cunque salve

Rite vocanti.

Ode xixii. lib. 2.

Anacreon, the Greek poet, is said also to have been in love with the fair Cleobulus, whom he had like to have killed when a child, in the arms of his nurse, by rudely jostling of her as he reeled one day through the streets, when he was in liquor; and not content with this, he abused the child with scurrilous language: the nurse wished he might one day commend him as much as he had then abused him. Her wishes were fulfilled, for Cleobulus grew to a beautiful youth, and Anacreon falling in love with him, wrote several verses in his praise.

Alcman

Alcman, a lyric poet, who flourished in the 27th Olympiad, was a man of a very amorous constitution; he is accounted the father of love-verses, and is said to have first introduced the custom of singing them in public.

To these few instances I cannot but add a very remarkable one mentioned by the duke de Sully, which shews a most admirable imagination, attended with the most terrible passions.

When that minister, in 1603, set out on an embassage for the court of England, he was attended by a numerous retinue of the principal gentlemen in France: amongst the rest Mr. Servin presented his young son to him; at the same time earnestly begging the duke, that he would use his best endeavours to make

make him an honest man. This request gave Sully a great curiosity to search into his character ; and he gives the following striking account of him.

His genius, says he, was so lively, that nothing could escape his penetration ; his apprehension was so quick, that he understood every thing in an instant ; and his memory so prodigious, that he never forgot any thing. He was master of all the branches of philosophy, the mathematics, particularly fortification and designing. Nay, he was so thoroughly acquainted with divinity, that he was an excellent preacher, when he pleased, and could manage the controversy for, or against the protestant religion, with the greatest ability. He not only understood the Greek, Hebrew, and other learned languages, but all the jargons
of

of the moderns. He entered so exactly into their pronunciation and accent, to which he joined such a perfect imitation of their air and manners, that not only the people of the different nations in Europe, but the several provinces of France, would have taken him for a native of the country. He applied his talent to imitate all sorts of persons, which he performed with wonderful dexterity; and was accordingly the best comedian in the world. He was a good poet, an excellent musician, and sung with equal art and sweetness. He said mass; for he would do every thing, as well as know every thing. His body was perfectly proportioned to his mind. He was well made, vigorous and agile, formed for all sorts of exercises. He rode a horse well, and was admired for dancing, leaping,

ing, and wrestling. He was acquainted with all kinds of sports and diversions, and could practise in most of the mathematical arts.—Reverse the medal, says Sully; he was a liar, false, treacherous, cruel, and cowardly, a sharper, drunkard, and glutton. He was a gamester, an abandoned debauchee, and blasphemer, and atheist. In a word, was possessed of every vice, contrary to nature, to honour, to religion, and society; he persisted in his vices to the last, and fell a sacrifice to his debaucheries, in the flower of his age. He died at the public stew, holding the glass in his hand, swearing and denying God.

8. And great Nassau to Kneller's hand decreed,
To fix him graceful on the bounding steed.

Neither king William nor queen
Mary ever sat to any other person besides
Sir

Sir Godfrey Kneller; and what is more remarkable, he had the honour to draw ten crowned heads; four kings of England and three queens, the czar of Muscovy, Charles III. king of Spain, afterwards emperor; and the French king Lewis XIV. besides divers electors and princes: by which means his reputation became so universal, that the emperor Leopold dignified him as a nobleman and knight of the holy Roman empire, by patent; and his majesty king George I. created him a baronet of Great Britain. He always lived in the greatest esteem and reputation; abounding no less in wealth than splendor; in both, far surpassing any of his predecessors. He spent the latter part of his life at Whitton, near Hampton Court, where he built a house after a complete manner, and furnished it in all respects accordingly.

Learn

Learn to live well, or fairly make your will ;
 You've play'd and lov'd, and eat and drank your
 fill :

Walk sober off, before a sprightlier age
 Comes titt'ring on, and shoves you from the stage :
 Leave such to trifle with more grace and ease,
 Whom folly pleases, and whose follies please *.

These lines are extremely beautiful ;
 and contain an excellent lesson for those
 old conceited people, who are not con-
 tented with being allowed understanding
 in those points, where experience confers
 knowledge, but must ape the fashionable
 follies of youth, and pretend to be as
 knowing in what concerns the younger
 part of mankind, as they ought to be in
 what regards themselves. Age, when it
 assumes the steadiness and wisdom of ex-
 perience, is venerable ; but when it de-

* Book II. Ep. ii. vers. 322.

viates into the foibles of youth, it becomes contemptible *.

Go

* “ What borrowed ornaments are these ? ” says Dr. Young, in an address to the aged part of the female sex. “ Is vanity still in its spring ? Is the folly of hairless heads, putting forth its gay blossoms in the December of life ? Age cannot drop its dignity, and yet retain its privileges. It must be laughed at, if it will not be revered †. To secure to the old that influence, which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary, that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years ; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolicks, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter ; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance

* Centaur not fabulous, vol. iv. 146.

Go see Sir Robert ———

P. See Sir Robert !——hum——

And never laugh—for all my life to come ?
 Seen him I have, but in his happier hour
 Of social pleasure, ill exchang'd for pow'r ;
 Seen him, uncumber'd with the venal tribe,
 Smile without art, and win without a bribe.
 Would he oblige me ? Let me only find,
 He does not think me what he thinks mankind ‡.

from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances, in which boys must always excel them ; if they will dress crippled limbs with embroidery, endeavour at gayety with faltering voices ; and darken the assemblies of pleasure, with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed, will hoot them away ; and if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

‡ Epil. to the Sat. Dial.i. ver. 27°

The

The lines are excessively beautiful, and poetical ; but the two last in particular contain an exact characteristic of the opinion which Sir Richard Walpole had of mankind. That minister used often to declare, that every man had his price ; and that although some men made a show of patriotism, it did not proceed from real virtue, but the want of a sufficient bribe. It appeared from the report of the secret committee for enquiring into the conduct of Robert earl of Orford, that upwards of fifty thousand pounds were paid to authors and printers of news-papers, such as Free-Britons, Daily Courants, Corn-Cutter's Journals, Gazetteers, and other political papers, from 1731 to 1741. Dr. Warburton very justly observes on this, that the benevolence of one minister expended, for the current dullness of ten years in

M 2

Britain,

Britain, double the sum which gained Lewis XIV. so much honour, in annual pensions to learned men all over Europe. In which, and in a much longer time, not a pension at court, nor preferment in the church or universities, of any consideration, was bestowed on any man distinguished for his learning, separately from party-merit, or pamphlet-writing †.

Yet all the panegyrics which these political writers bestowed on their patron, are now buried in oblivion : not one of them is so well known as this compliment of Mr. Pope's. What could induce Mr. Walpole to introduce strokes of party politicks into his Catalogue of roy-

† Notes on the Dunciad, book ii. v. 314.

al and noble authors, I cannot conceive : they are unpardonable in a mere literary book ; but particularly so, when they transgress the bounds of truth. " It is not proper nor necessary," says he, " for me to touch his character here. " — Sixteen unfortunate and inglorious " years since his removal have already " written his elogium §."

Supposing that the years since Sir Robert Walpole's removal, were as inglorious as those of his ministry ; yet is it any apology for a bad minister to say,

§ Vol. ii. p. 138. And speaking of admiral Montague, he says,—" It is remarkable that he was the last commoner who was honoured with the garter, except one man, to whose virtues and merit may some impartial pen do as much justice, as I have satisfaction in rendering to this great person." p. 8.

that he was succeeded by as great knaves as himself? How well the national honour of Great Britain was supported during his ministry is well known; but how could a minister act with becoming firmness in the affairs of Europe, whose greatest dread was that of a war? and who would let his sovereign and his country receive any insults sooner than go into one, a time in which he knew his own power would be in danger of falling. Yet, even during so long and peaceable an administration, the only effect that resulted from it, was the introducing the most iniquitous scheme of government that could possibly be framed, since he laid the foundation of his power on infamy, bribery, and corruption; nor could it subsist, but at the expence of virtue, patriotism, probity, and honour. Mr. Pope draws a striking and most beau;

beautiful picture of the corruptness of this age, in the conclusion of the first dialogue in the epilogue to the satires,

Lo ! at the wheels of her † triumphal car,
 Old England's genius rough with many a scar,
 Dragg'd in the dust ! his arms hang idly round,
 His flag inverted trails along the ground !
 Our youth all liv'ry'd o'er with foreign gold,
 Before her dance ; behind her crawl the old !
 See thronging millions to the pagod run,
 And offer country, parent, wife, or son !
 Hear her black trumpet thro' the land proclaim,
That not to be corrupted is the shame.
 In soldier, churchman, patriot, man in pow'r,
 'Tis avarice all, ambition is no more ;
 See, all our nobles begging to be slaves,
 See, all our fools aspiring to be knaves.
 The wit of cheats, the courage of a whore,
 Are what ten thousand envy and adore :
 All, all look up with reverential awe,
 At crimes that 'scape, or triumph o'er the law :
 While truth, worth, wisdom, daily they decry,
 " Nothing is sacred now but villainy."

† Vice.

M 4

Mr.

Mr. Pope's moral essays are all, except the Essay on Man, extremely well wrote fatires. The vices and follies of the age were always lashed by him with equal wit and judgment; and none of his pieces display more beautiful passages than these essays.

1. Tho' the same sun with all diffusive rays,
Blush in the rose, and in the di'mond blaze,
We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,
And justly set the gem above the flow'r. *

No man had ever a happier way of expressing his ideas than Pope; he is peculiarly excellent in expressive epithets and metaphorical expressions; I hardly know a more beautiful line than the second of these, and the poetry is not only pleasing, but the thought just.

2. Search then the ruling passion : There alone
The wild are constant, and the cunning known ;

* Ep. i. ver. 145.

The

The fool consistent, and the false sincere,
 Priests, princes, women, no dissemblers here:
 This clue once found unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,
 Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise:
 Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
 Women and fools must like him, or he dies;
 Tho' wond'ring senates hung on all he spoke,
 The club must hail him master of the joke.
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
 He'll shine a Tully, and a Wilmot too.

Then turns repentant, and his God adores
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
 Enough if all around him but admire,
 And now the punk applaud, and now the frier.
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,
 And most contemptible to shun contempt;
 His passion still to covet gen'ral praise,
 His life to forfeit it a thousand ways;
 A constant bounty which no friend has made;
 An angel-tongue, which no man can persuade;
 A fool, with more of wit than half mankind,
 Too rash for thought, for action too refin'd:

A ty-

A tyrant to the wife his heart approves ;
 A rebel to the very king he loves ;
 He dies sad out-cast of each church and state,
 And, harder still ! flagitious, yet not great.
 Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule ?
 'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.*

This is one of those masterly characters in the drawing of which Pope excelled so greatly. I cannot help here quoting an anecdote that marks the vivacity and wit of this volatile duke. When he was upon his travels at Geneva, being much disgusted with his governor, he left him at that city, and set out post for Lyons. His lordship, somewhere in his travels, had picked up a bear's cub, of which he was very fond, always carrying it about with him ; but when he was determined to abandon his tutor, he left the cub behind him, with the following ad-

* Ver. 174.

dress,

dress, " Being no longer able to bear with your ill usage, I think proper to be gone from you : however, that you may not want company, I have left you the bear, as the most suitable companion in the world that could be picked out for you."—The rambles of this celebrated man are well known ; and that he had great abilities, is undisputed. Mr. Walpole relates a curious affair that happened between the duke and Sir Robert Walpole : at the time when he made his famous speech on inflicting pains and penalties on the bishop of Rochester, he was in opposition to the court ; his grace went to Chelsea the day before the last debate on that prelate's affair, where acting contrition, he professed being determined to work out his pardon at court by speaking against the bishop ; in order to which he begged some hints. The minister

minister was deceived, and went thro' the whole cause with him, pointing out where the strength of the argument lay, and where its weakness. The duke was very thankful, returned to town, passed the night in drinking, and without going to bed, went to the house of lords, where he spoke *for* the bishop, recapitulating in the most masterly manner, and answering all that had been urged against him. His speech against the ministry two years before, on the affair of the South Sea company, had a fatal effect; earl Stanhope answering it with so much warmth, that he burst a blood-vessel, and died.

3. " Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,

(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)

" No, let a charming chintz, and Brussels lace,

" Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face;

" One

“ One would not sure be frightful when one’s dead,
 “ And—Betty—give this cheek a little red.”*

By Narcissa is here meant the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield, who was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey. Her corpse lay in state at the Jerusalem chamber; adorned, at her own request, with a head-dress of Brussels lace, a Holland shift, with tucker and double ruffles of the same lace, and a pair of new kid gloves.

The second epistle on the characters of women, is one of the most exquisite pieces that Pope ever wrote: it abounds with many portraits drawn with great art and judgment; that of Atossa is particularly excellent, and marked with those strokes of ridicule, that render Pope’s satires so entertaining. I have been informed that by this Atossa is

* Ver. 246.

meant

meant the old duchess of Marlborough, and that her grace being informed of Pope's design to satirize her, sent him a thousand guineas to ward off the blow, which Pope accepted, and then inserted her character; but this can hardly be credited.

1. Ah! friend! to dazzle let the vain design;
To raise the thought and touch the heart be thine?
That charm shall grow, while what fatigues the
ring,

Flaunts and goes down an unregarded thing:
So when the sun's broad beam has tir'd the light,
All mild ascends the moon's more sober light;
Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
And unobserv'd the glaring orb declines. *

These beautiful lines contain the finest advice to females to aim at being rather agreeable than dazzling; we expect in the fair sex rather a soul soft and pleasing, a certain calm delicacy of mind, than

* Ver. 249.

than striking traits of heroic character,
which are more natural in men.

2. In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half
hung,
The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung,
On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
With tape-ty'd curtains never meant to draw,
The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
Great Villiers lies—alas ! how chang'd from him,
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim !
Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love ;
Or just as gay at council, in a ring
Of mimick'd statesmen, and their merry king ;
No wit to flatter, left of all his store ;
No fool to laugh at which he valu'd more :
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame ; this lord of useless thousands ends †.

The character of the duke of Bucking-
ham, contained in these and the follow-

† Verse, 300.

ing

ing lines, are extremely beautiful, and just. This lord, so famous for his abilities, vices, and misfortunes, made a considerable figure in the reign of Charles II. Dryden satirized him in his admirable character of Zimri ; but his grace was fully revenged, as an ingenious gentleman expresses it, by making Dryden satirize himself. This nobleman, who had been possessed of an estate of 50,000 l. a year, and passed through many of the most considerable posts in the kingdom, died at a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost distress.

3. And now the chapel's silver bell you hear,
That summons you to all the pride of pray'r :
Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to heav'n ||.

When Cannons was in all its glory,
Handel composed for the duke of Chan-

Ep. iv. ver. 140.

dois's

dois's chapel, if Pope meant to ridicule the affected magnificence of that nobleman in having such a composer, his satire was ill-directed, since in this respect his conduct was really magnificent.—

This whole epistle, but more particularly that part of it which satirizes the duke's want of taste, is one of the most exquisite pieces of the kind that Pope wrote; such a poet, with such an object of ridicule, could not but produce an excellent poem. 'Tis very remarkable, that prediction contained in the following lines is quite fulfilled.

Another age shall see the golden ear
Imbrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
Deep harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

Cannons 'tis said cost upwards of two
hundred thousand pounds building; and

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N

when

when pulled down the materials did not fetch thirty six thousand.

Mr. Pope's satires, it may be perceived, even from the passages which I have quoted, are wrote with an infinite fund of wit and ridicule; an exquisite and penetrating knowledge of human nature; and are cloathed in such a beautiful poetic stile, as justly entitles them to the first place amongst the satyrical poems in the English language. As to the Dunciad, the merit of the poem is universally allowed; but unfortunately for posterity, the subject has so little in it engaging to any other time, but that age in which it was wrote, that I cannot help regretting, that so fine a genius should employ so much time and poetry in immortalizing a set of wretches, who,
had

had it not been for his writings, would have been long ago buried for ever in oblivion. The greatest excellency in the Dunciad consists in its mock heroics.

Dr. Young's are the next satires I shall be particular in mentioning in this essay. There is indeed a great falling off from Pope's to those of this reverend gentleman; but as they contain some bright passages, and are wrote in the cause of virtue, with great goodness of design, the reader will excuse an endeavour to point out some of their beauties.

1. Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,
And satirise with nothing but their praise* ?

The stroke in the last line is very good. Pope somewhere summing up all the impudent practices of his enemies to abuse

* Young's Works, vol. iv. p. 80. sat. 1.

him, concludes with saying, " One more abusive calls himself my friend."—

2. It makes dear self on well bred tongues prevail,

And I the little hero of each tale *.

This satire is extremely just. How often do we hear men who disgust all their acquaintances by trumpeting their own praises? Nothing surely can destroy that freedom and ease which ought to reign in the conversation of friends, more than the impertinence of those who think every man has nothing to attend to but their encomiums, which they bestow on themselves. This disposition renders great abilities disgusting; but when we find it equally predominant in those who have little important to say for themselves, it becomes intolerable.

* Ibid. p. 83.

3. The love of praise, howe'er conceal'd by art,
 Reigns more or less, and glows in ev'ry heart :
 The proud to gain it, toils on toils endure ;
 The modest shun it but to make it sure †.

These lines are pretty, and the sentiment extremely just. “ Praise, says the Rambler, is so pleasing to the mind of man, that it is the original motive of almost all our actions. The design of commendation, as of every thing else, is varied indeed by innumerable differences of temper, capacity, and knowledge ; some have no higher wish than for the applause of a club ; some expect the acclamations of a country ; and some have hoped to fill the mouths of all ages and nations with their names. Every man pants for the highest eminence within his view ; none, however mean, even sinks below the hope of being distinguish-

† Sat. 1.

ed

ed by his fellow beings, and very few have, by magnanimity or piety, been so raised above it, as to act wholly without regard to censure or opinion. *

4. Parts may be prais'd, good nature is ador'd ;
Then draw your wit as seldom as your sword,
And never on the weak ; or you'll appear
As there no hero, no great genius here.
As in smooth oil the razor best is whet,
So wit is by politeness sharpest set :
Their want of edge from their offence is seen ;
Both pain us least when exquisitely keen. †

These lines are poetic, and contain excellent advice to those whose wit is directed by their ill-nature ; and the simile of the razor expressive and just. Addison has somewhere in the Spectator drawn a kind of parallel between a good natural man and a wit, and has shown

* Rambler, vol. iv. Numb. 193.

† Sat. 2.

with

with his usual penetration, how contemptible a figure wit must make when not founded in good nature. Bursts of laughter at a club may crown the cause of ill-natured wit ; but it is too much admired to be esteemed. Surely the man who exposes those failings in human nature which humanity should teach him to throw a veil over ; who laughs at vices which ought either to be excused or concealed, and falling indifferently upon friends or foes, exposes the person who has obliged him, and in short sticks at nothing that may establish his character of a wit ; such a man, I say, ought rather to be detested than admired.

5. And what so foolish as the chase of fame ?
 How vain the prize ? How impotent our aim ?
 For what are men who grasp at praise sublime,
 But bubbles on the rapid stream of time ?

That

That rise and fall, that swell and are no more,
Born and forgot ten thousand in an hour.*

These lines are much more poetic and harmonious, and the thought better expressed, than is usual in Dr. Young's poetry. The metaphor of comparing the life of man to the bubble of a stream, although not new, is here extremely beautiful.

* Sat. 2.

END of VOL. II. PART I.



